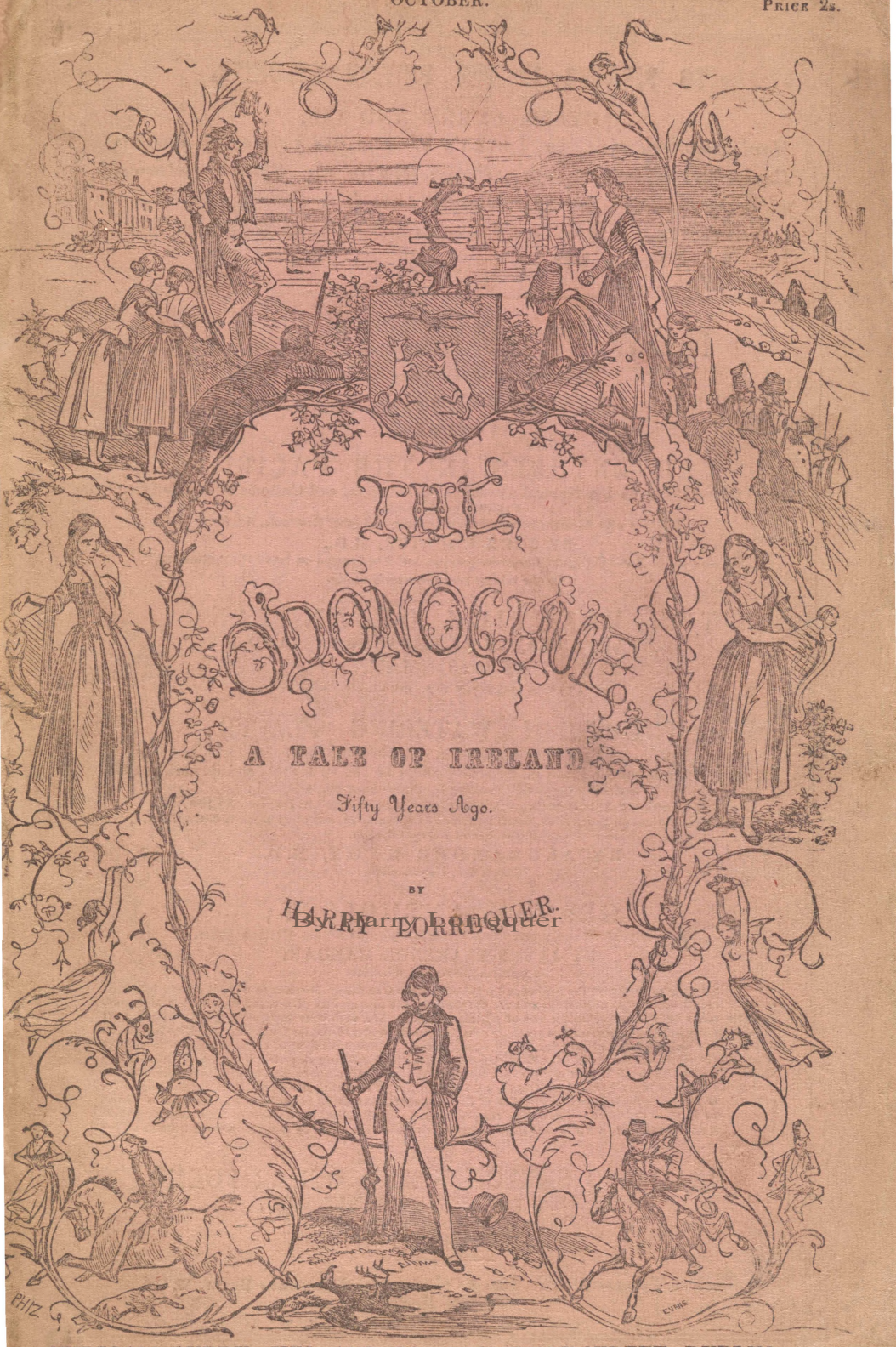

THE O'DONOGHUE

A TALE OF IRELAND

Fifty Years Ago.

BY

HARRY LORREQUER.

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The Wanderer's return.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

It was about two months after the events detailed in the last chapter, on the evening of a bright day in midsummer, that a solitary traveller was seen descending one of the mountain-passes which lead from Macroom to Glengariff, and which were only known to those well acquainted with the place. He led his horse by the bridle, for the ground did not admit of riding; but were it otherwise, the beast showed too many signs of a hard journey not to make the course advisable, and in this respect both horse and rider well agreed. The man, though young and athletic, was emaciated and weary-looking. His clothes, once good, seemed neglected; and his beard, unshaven and uncared for, gave an air of savage ferocity to a face pale and care-worn, while his horse, with as many evidences of better days, exhibited unquestionable signs of fatigue and bad-feeding. The path by which he descended was the cleft worn by a mountain-torrent, a rough and rugged road, with many spots of difficulty and danger, but neither these nor the scene which unfolded itself in the glen beneath, attracted any share of his attention; and yet few scenes were fairer to look upon. The sun was just setting, and its last glories were lighting up the purple tints upon the mountains, and shedding a flood of golden hue over lake and river. The bright yellow of the furze, and the gay colours of the foxglove contrasted with the stern grandeur of the dark rocks, while in the abundance of wild holly and arbutus which grew from even the most precipitous places, the scene had a character of seeming cultivation to an eye unpractised to the foliage of this lovely valley. The traveller, who, for above an hour, had pursued his way, treading with the skill of a mountaineer over places where a false step might have perilled life, and guiding his horse with a caution that seemed an instinct, so little of his attention did it exact, at last halted, and, leaning his arm over his saddle, stood for some time in contemplation of the picture. From the spot on which he stood, one solitary cabin was discernible on the side of the road that wound through the valley, and from whose chimney a thin blue smoke slowly curled, and floated along the mountain side. On this little habitation the traveller's eyes were fixedly bent, until their gaze was dimmed by a passing emotion. He drew his hand roughly over his face, as if angry

at his own weakness, and was about to proceed on his way, when a shrill whistle from a cliff above his head arrested his step. It was a mountain recognition he well knew, and was about to reply to, when suddenly, with a bounding speed that seemed perilous in such a place, a creature clad in the most tattered rags, but with naked legs and bare head, came springing towards him.

"I knew you from the top of Goorhaun dhub—I knew you well, Master Mark. There's not many with a good coat on their back could venture over the way you came, and I said to myself it was you," cried Terry the Woods, as with his pale features lit up in smiles, he welcomed the young O'Donoghue to his native hills.

"How are they all yonder?" asked Mark, in a voice scarcely above a whisper, pointing with his finger up the glen in the direction of Carrig-na-curra, but which was not visible from where they were.

"I saw the master yesterday," replied Terry, who applied to the O'Donoghue the respected title by which he was known in his own household. "He was sitting on a big chair at the window, and the young girl with the black eyes was reading to him out of a book—but sorra much he was mindin' it, for when he seen me he beckoned this way, and says he, 'Terry, you villain, why don't you ever come up here now and talk to me?' 'Faix,' says I, 'I haven't the heart to do it. Since Master Mark was gone, I didn't like the place,' and the master wiped his eyes, and the young girl made a sign to me not to speak about that any more."

"And who is at 'the Lodge' now?" asked Mark, endeavouring to restrain any semblance of emotion, even before Terry.

"There's nobody but the agent. The family is over in England till the house is ready for them. Oh, then, but you'll wonder to see the illigant place it is now, wid towers and spires all over it—the ground all gardens, with grass walks as fine as a carpet, and the beautifullest flowers growin' against the walls and up against the windows, and a fountain, as they call it, of cool water spouting up in the air, and coming down like rain."

"And my brother—where is he?"

"He's over in England with the family from 'the Lodge;' the black-eyed girl, Miss Kate, wouldn't go. They say—but there's no knowing if it's true—they say she likes Hemsworth better than the Captain—and troth, if she does, its a dhroll choice."

"Like Hemsworth! Do they say that my cousin likes Hemsworth?" said Mark, whose anger was only kept down by gazing on the tranquil features of the poor witless object before him.

"They do," said Terry quietly, "and it's razonable, too, seein' that he's never out of the house from morning till night."

"What house?—where do you mean?"

"What house but Carrig-na-curra—your father's house."

Mark passed his hand across his forehead, and over his closed eyelids, and for a second or two seemed trying to dispel some horrible vision, for deep-rooted as was his jealousy of Frederick Travers, his most gloomy forebodings had never conjured up the thought of such a rival as Hemsworth, nor did he now credit it. His indignation was, however, scarcely less to think that this man should now be received on terms of intimacy, perhaps of friendship, by those he so long pursued with insult and oppression. He paid no attention to Terry, as he continued to narrate the changes effected in his absence, and the various surmises current among the people to account for his long absence, when at length they approached the high road that led up the valley. Here Terry halted, and, pointing in the direction of Mary's cabin, about half a mile distant, said—

"I can't go any further with you. I dar'n't go there."

"And why not, my poor fellow?" said Mark, compassionately, for the terror depicted in his face too plainly indicated the return of some hallucination.

"They're there, now," said Terry, in a faint whisper, "watching for me. They're five weeks waiting to catch me, but if I keep in the mountains I needn't care."

"And who are they, Terry?"

"The soldiers," said Terry, trembling all over. "I ran away from them, and they want to shoot me for desarting."

"And there are soldiers quartered at Mary's now?"

"Ay, and at Macroom, and at Bantry, and Kinsale—they have them all round us; but devil a one o' me cares; so long as they keep to the towns, I'll never trouble them."

"And how does poor Mary bear it?" said Mark.

"Bad enough, I hear, for nobody ever goes into the house at all, since she had the red-coats, and there she's pining away every day; but I must be going. I'll come down and see you soon, Master Mark, and I hope you won't lave us in a hurry again." Terry did not wait for any rejoinder to this speech, but with the agility of his wild life, sprung lightly up the mountain, from whence his voice was heard gaily carolling as he went, long afterwards.

Mark looked after him for a few moments, and probably amid the compassionate feelings with which he regarded the poor creature, there

were mingled others of actual envy, so light-hearted and happy did he seem amidst all his poverty.

"I could even change with him," said Mark, aloud, and then, as if he had unburdened his heart of its weary load, he resumed his way.

The grey twilight was fast merging into night, as he approached the little inn, nor was it without emotion that he watched the light that streamed from the windows across the road. Many an evening of his happy boyhood had been passed beside that humble hearth—many a thrilling tale and many a merry story had he listened to, there. Beneath that roof it was he first imbibed the proud thoughts of his house and family, and learned to know the estimation in which men held his name. It was there he first felt the spirit of chieftainship, and there, too, he had first devoted himself to the cause of his country. Alas! these were but sad memories, how he had lived to find himself deceived, by every one he had trusted; falsehood and treachery in so many shapes surrounded him, that it needed only the extinction of hope to make him feel his life a weary and unprofitable load. He stood for a few seconds before the door, and listened with an indignant spirit to the coarse revelry of the soldiers who caroused within. Their very laughter smote upon his ear like derision, and he turned away from the spot, angry and impatient. Some vague resolve to return home and take a last farewell of his father, was the only plan he could fix on; whither, afterwards, or how, he knew not, nor did he care. Like most men who attribute their failures in life to evil destinies that sway them, and not to their own faults and follies, his fatalism urged him to a recklessness of the future, and in place of hope there sprung up in his heart a strange feeling of wonder to think, what trials and straits fortune might yet have in store for him. He often deliberated with himself how he should meet, and how part with his father—whether acknowledge that he knew the secret of the deceit that had been practised upon him, or whether he should conceal that knowledge within his own bosom. To do the latter was his final resolve. To spare the old man the added misery of knowing that his son had detected his criminality, was the suggestion of his better and purer feeling, and even though his leaving him should thus be wanting in the only excuse he could proffer, he preferred this to the misery another course would entail.

At last he reached the old gateway, and often as it had been his lot to bring beneath its shadow a heavy and sorrow-struck heart, never had he passed it so deeply depressed as now.

"Come on, good beast," he said, patting the wearied horse, "you

shall have rest here, and that," said he, with a sigh, "that, is more than I can promise to myself."

With these sad words he toiled up the steep ascent, and gained the terrace in front of the Castle. There were lights burning in the old tower and in the hall, but all the rest of the building was in darkness. The door lay open, and as Mark stood within it, he could hear the mellow sounds of a harp which came floating softly through the long-vaulted corridor, blended with a voice that stirred the fibres of his strong heart, and made him tremble like a child.

"Why should I not linger here?" thought he; "why not stay and listen to these sweet sounds? I shall never hear them more!" and he stood and bent his ear to drink them in, and stirred not until they ceased. The last chord had died away in silence—then hastily fastening his horse to the door-ring, he entered the long passage unnoticed by any, and reached the door. The sound of voices, as of persons talking pleasantly together, struck harshly on his ear, and the loud laughter that burst forth grated strangely on his senses.

"They have little sorrow for the outcast—that is certain," said he, as, with a swelling heart and proud step, he opened the door and entered.

This part of the room lay in deep shadow, and while Mark could distinctly perceive the others, they could but dimly discern the outline of his figure, without being able to recognize him. His father and Sir Archy were seated, as of old, on either side of the chimney; Kate was leaning over her harp, which she had just ceased to play; while seated near her, and bending forward in an attitude of eager attention, was Hemsworth himself, the man of all others he least wished to see at such a moment.

"Who is that?" cried the O'Donoghue, "who is standing yonder?" and they all turned their eyes towards the door.

"Why don't you speak?" continued the old man. "Have you any tidings from my son?—is it news of Mark you bring me?"

"Even so sir," responded the other, as he slowly advanced into the strong light, his arms folded upon his breast, and his brow stern and contracted.

"Mark!—my boy! my child!" cried the old man, springing from his chair, and, with a strength that seemed at once to defy age and infirmity, rushed towards him, and threw his arms about him. "He's here—he's with us once more!" said he, in accents half choked by sobs—"my son! my hope! my pride!"—and while the old man poured forth these words of happiness, the young one stood pale, cold, and

seemingly apathetic. His eyes bent on vacancy, and his features devoid of all expression of passion, he turned from Sir Archy, who grasped one hand, and looked at Kate, who held the other between hers, but in his gaze there was rather the look of one suddenly recalled to consciousness out of some long-fevered sleep, than the healthful aspect of waking life.

"You are not ill, Mark—you're only fatigued," said Kate, as a tear slowly trickled down her cheek, and fell upon his hand.

Mark started as he felt the drop, and looked at her with a searching glance, then turned his eyes towards Hemsworth, and back again to her, and for the first time a stern and scornful smile curled upon his lip. Kate seemed to read the glance, and returned it with a look, proud and haughty as his own, while dropping his hand, she walked towards her chair without speaking.

"We maun let him hae a bit supper as soon as may be," said Sir Archy, whose practical good sense saw how much bodily fatigue influenced the youth's demeanour.

"Supper!" said the O'Donoghue; "ay, faith, every bottle in the cellar would be too little to celebrate the boy's return. Ring that bell, Archy. Where is Kerry? What are the people doing not to know that their young master is here?"

"At another moment, I should beg that Mr. O'Donoghue might remember me," said Hemsworth, with a deferential bow. "And I hope the time is coming when I may be permitted to renew my acquaintance;—for the present, I feel how unsuited the presence of a stranger is, on an occasion like this, and cannot better show how deeply I appreciate your feeling than by taking my leave."

So saying, he courteously saluted the O'Donoghue, Sir Archy, and Kate; while, turning to Mark, he proffered his hand, as he said—

"Pray, sir, let the occasion excuse the liberty, and permit me to add my welcome also."

"You do the honours of this house too early, sir," was Mark's savage reply, while he folded his arms upon his breast, and measured Hemsworth with a glance of withering scorn. "I'm beneath my father's roof. It is not for a stranger to bid me welcome here."

Hemsworth smiled, and muttered some words in mild acquiescence, their tone and accent were apologetic, and the manner in which he spoke them humble even to humility. When they were uttered, he bowed deeply, and with a look towards the others that seemed to indicate the absence of any feeling of offence, withdrew.

"You are unco severe on Maister Hemsworth, Mark," said Sir Archy, gravely. "If his politeness wasna altogether correct, it was weel intended."

"Mark was all right, whatever he said," cried the old man, exultingly. "Egad, I'll not dispute with the boy to-night, if he thought proper to throw the fellow out of the window."

"I am sorry my rudeness should have offended others," said Mark, with a sidelong glance at Kate. "As for Mr. Hemsworth, we understand each other. He neither thinks better nor worse of me than he did before."

"D——n Hemsworth!" said the O'Donoghue; "why are we talking of him at all? Sit down beside me, Mark. Let me see you again, my boy, in your old place. Give me your hand, and let me think that my three months of fretting have only been a dream."

"Would it had been a dream to me," said Mark, with a deep sigh, as he seated himself beside the old man.

"Come, come, Mark," said Sir Archy, "Ye hae often laughed at my Scotch adage about 'byganes,' let me have my revenge now by applying it to your own fortunes."

"So, you have come at last," cried the O'Donoghue, as Kerry O'Leary at length made his appearance at the door. "Is Master Mark to go supperless to bed——"

"Master Mark," shouted Kerry, "Oh, murther alive, and is it himself that's in it. Oh, blessed hour, but I'm glad to see you home again, and your honor looking so well and hearty. Maybe we won't have bonfires over the hills, when the boys hear it."

"The supper, the supper. Confound the fellow, the boy is famished, and the rascal stands prating there about bonfires."

"My horse is far more in need of care than I am," said Mark, suddenly, remembering the wearied animal he left fastened to the door. "I must look to the poor beast before I take anything myself;" and so saying he left the room, none wishing to gainsay anything he desired to do.

"Poor fellow," said the O'Donoghue, "how pale and careworn he looks—he appears to have suffered heavily."

"Depend upon it," said Sir Archy, gravely, "the lad has learned much since we saw him last. I dinna mislike the look his features have, although it be one of sorrow. What says Kate?" No answer followed this appeal, but the young girl turned away her head, and affected to assist in arranging the table.

"Mind, Archy," said the O'Donoghue, eagerly, "remember, not a

word about his absence, no questioning whatever—the boy has gone through too many troubles already to bear the penalty of relating them. Take care, too, that there be no allusion to Hemsworth, Mark does not yet know the friendly part he has taken, and only knows him as we used to think and speak of him of old—but hush, here he comes."

When Mark re-entered the room, he seemed at least easier, if not happier, than before. The cloud that Hemsworth's presence threw over him had passed away, and he felt anxious to show himself in more favourable colours than his first appearance had displayed. While, therefore, he did his utmost to repay to his father and uncle, the kind and affectionate greetings by which they met him—to his cousin Kate he was either sternly distant, or totally indifferent in manner; and when at last, repulsed in many efforts to attract his notice, she arose to retire for the night, he took a formal leave of her, and seemed relieved by her departure. This was not remarked by the O'Donoghue; but Sir Archy was a shrewd observer, and noted the circumstance with displeasure; still, too careful of consequences to show that he had observed it, he reserved his interference for another and more favourable moment, and soon afterwards, wished them good night, and left the room.

"It is time for me to go also," said Mark, as, after a silence of some moments, he arose, and lighted a candle. "I have not been accustomed to a good bed latterly, and I feel that one sound night's sleep is due to me."

"But for that, Mark, I could not part with you just yet. I have so much to say, so much to hear from you. There have been many things during your absence I must tell you of."

"And first of all," said Mark, rapidly, "How comes that man, Hemsworth, so intimate here? What claim has he to darken our door with his presence?"

"The strong claim of true friendship," said the old man, firmly, "a claim I have not met so much of in life, that I can afford to undervalue it when it does present itself. But for him, the ejectment would have been sued out last assizes—he saved us also from a foreclosure of Drake's mortgage—advanced me five thousand pounds upon my own bond, Archy being a co-surety, which you well know was a matter of form. This, besides saving us from any proceedings the Travers' might have taken, in revenge for their own disappointment about Kate——"

"Speak more plainly, I beg you, sir, and above all, please to remember that I am ignorant of everything you allude to. What of Kate?"

"Oh, I forgot you were not with us then. It was a proposal of marriage. Young Travers made your cousin a brilliant offer, as far as

money was concerned, which Kate refused. There was some negociation about leaving the thing open. Something about the future—I forget exactly what—but I only know she was peremptory and decided, as she always is, and wrote to me to take her home. Archy went up for her to Dublin, and the Travers' soon after left Ireland in high indignation with us, and determined, as we soon found, to let us feel their enmity. Then it was that we learned to appreciate Hemsworth, whom all along we had so completely mistaken, and indeed, but for him, we should never have heard of you."

"Of me. What did he know of me?"

"Everything, Mark—all"—said the old man, in a low whisper, as he stole a prying glance through the room to satisfy himself that they were not overheard.

"Once more, sir, speak out, and intelligibly—say what this man seemed to know of me?"

"He knew Talbot—Barrington rather"—said the O'Donoghue, in a low voice—"knew of your intercourse with him—knew of the plot that fellow laid to entangle you in his schemes—knew all about the robbery at the Curragh, and saved you, without your knowing it, from being there. But for him, Mark, your name would have figured in the "Hue-and-Cry." A reward for your apprehension was actually deliberated at the Privy Council. Hemsworth rescued you from this——"

"The scoundrel—the base, black-hearted villain," exclaimed Mark, "did he dare to speak thus of *me?*"

"You mistake, Mark, he never said you were culpable—he only deplored the fatal accident of your intimacy with Barrington—a man twice convicted and sentenced—that in company with this man you frequented certain houses of high play, where more than one large robbery was effected. Then came the Castle ball—was it not true that you went there? Well, the diamond snuff-box stolen from Lord Clangoff, at the card table ——"

"Hell and confusion, you will drive me mad," cried Mark, stamping his foot with passion. "This infernal mixture of truth and falsehood —this half fact and all lying statement is more than my brain can bear. What does this scoundrel mean—is it that I am guilty of a robbery?"

"Heaven forbid, boy, but that you lived on terms of closest friendship with one branded as a felon, and that information of your intimacy with him was obtained by the police, who, for political reasons—you are aware of what I mean—would strain a point to have caught you within their grasp. There were letters too, Mark, written by you,

and of such a character as would, if proved against you, have cost your life; these, Hemsworth, by some means, obtained and destroyed."

"Ah, did he so," cried Mark, eagerly, for now a sudden light broke in upon him of the game that Hemsworth had played, "and so, he burned my letters?"

"You know now, then, something of the services he rendered you," said the old man, who began at last to be satisfied that his conviction was coming home to Mark's mind.

"I do," replied he, calmly, "I believe that I can appreciate his kindness, and I believe also I may promise that I shall not prove ungrateful—and Kate, sir, what said she to those revelations concerning me?"

"What we all said, Mark, that nothing dishonourable would ever lie at your door—there might be rashness, imprudence, and folly, but guilt or dishonour never."

"And my uncle, he is generally a shrewd and cautious judge—what was his opinion?"

"Faith it is hard to say, Mark, but I think with all his affected freedom from prejudice, he nourishes his old notions about Hemsworth as strong as ever, and persists in thinking the Travers' family everything amiable and high-minded, indeed, he forced me to let Herbert accompany them to England, for I let him take the boy into his own hands, and so, as the invitation had been made and accepted before Kate had refused the Captain's offer, I thought it would look better even to suffer matters to take their course quietly, as if nothing had happened."

"It was well done," said Mark, assentingly, "and now I have heard enough to dream over for one night at least, and so I'll to bed."

"Remember, Mark," said the O'Donoghue, grasping his son's arm, "remember I am solemnly pledged to Hemsworth never to tell you anything of these matters—it was a promise he exacted from me—I rely upon you, Mark, not to betray me."

"My discretion is above price, sir," said Mark, smiling dubiously, and left the room.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"SUSPICIONS ON EVERY SIDE."

EARLY on the following morning Mark O'Donoughue was on his way to "the Lodge." To see Hemsworth, and dare him to a proof of his assertions regarding him, or provoke him, if possible, to a quarrel, were his waking thoughts throughout the night, and not even all his weariness and exhaustion could induce sleep. He did not, indeed, know the full depth of the treachery practised against him; but in what he had discovered there were circumstances that portended a well-planned and systematic scheme of villainy. The more Mark reflected on these things, the more he saw the importance of proceeding with a certain caution. Hemsworth's position at Carrig-na-curra, the advances he had made in his father's esteem, the place he seemed to occupy in Kate's good graces, were such that any altercation which should not succeed in unmasking the infamy of his conduct, would only be regarded as a burst of boyish intemperance and passion; and although Mark was still but too much under the influence of such motives, he was yet far less so than formerly; besides, to fix a duel on Hemsworth might be taken as the consequences of a sense of rivalry on his part, and anger that his cousin had preferred him to himself. This thought was intolerable; the great effort he proposed to his heart, was to eradicate every sentiment of affection for his cousin, and every feeling of interest. To be able to regard her as one whose destiny had never crossed with his own—to do this, was now become a question of self-esteem and pride. To return her indifference as haughtily as she bestowed it, was a duty he thought he owed to himself, and therefore he shrunk from anything which should have the faintest semblance of avenging his own defeat.

Such were some of the difficulties of his present position, and he thought over them long and patiently, weighing well the consequences each mode of acting might entail, and deliberating with himself as to what course he should follow. His first resolve, then, which was to fasten a hostile meeting upon Hemsworth, was changed for what seemed a better line of procedure—which was simply to see that gentleman, to demand an explanation of the statements he had made concerning him, calling upon him to retract whenever anything unfounded occurred, and requiring him to acknowledge that he had given a colouring and semblance to his conduct at total variance with fact. By this means, Mark calcu-

lated on the low position to which Hemsworth would be reduced in Kate's estimation, the subterfuges and excuses he would be forced to adopt,—all the miserable expedients to gloss over his falsehood, and all the contemptible straits to conceal his true motives. To exhibit him in this light before Kate's eyes, she whose high sense of honour never brooked the slightest act that savoured of mere expediency, would be a far more ample revenge than any which should follow a personal rencontre.

"She shall see him in his true colours," muttered he to himself, as he went along; "she shall know something of the man to whom she would pledge honour and affection; and then, when his treachery is open as the noon-day, and the blackness of his heart revealed, she shall be free to take him, unscathed and uninjured. I'll never touch a hair of his head."

Mark had a certain pride in thus conducting himself on this occasion, to show that he possessed other qualities than those of rash and impetuous courage—that he could reason calmly and act deliberately, was now the great object he had at heart. Nor was the least motive that prompted him the desire he felt to exhibit himself to Kate in circumstances more favourable than any mere outbreak of indignant rage would display him.

The more he meditated on these things, the more firm and resolute were his determinations not to suffer Hemsworth to escape his difficulties, by converting the demand for explanation into an immediate cause of quarrel. Such a tactique he thought it most probable Hemsworth would at once adopt, as the readiest expedient in his power.

"No," said Mark to himself, "he shall find that he has mistaken me; my patience and endurance will stand the proof; he must and shall avow his own baseness, and then, if he wish for fighting——"

The clenched lip and flashing eye the words were accompanied by, plainly confessed that, if Mark had adopted a more pacific line of conduct, it certainly was not in obedience to any temptations of his will.

Immersed in his reveries, he found himself in front of "the Lodge" before he was aware of it; and, although his thoughts were of a nature that left him little room for other considerations, he could not help standing in surprise and admiration at the changes effected in his absence. The neat but unpretending cottage had now been converted into a building of Elizabethean style; the front extended along the lake side, to which it descended in two terraced gardens. The ample windows, thrown open to the ground, displayed a suite of apartments furnished with all that taste and luxury could suggest—the walls ornamented by pictures, and the panels of both doors and window-shutters formed of

plate glass, reflecting the mountain scenery in every variety of light and shadow. The rarest flowers, the most costly shrubs, brought from long distances, at great risk and price, were here assembled to add their beauties to a scene where nature had already been so lavish.

While Mark was yet looking about in quest of the entrance to the building, he saw a man approach, with whose features he was well acquainted. This was no other than Sam. Wylie, the sub-agent, the same he had treated so roughly when last they met. The fellow seemed to know that, though in certain respects the tables were now turned, yet, that with such a foe as Mark O'Donoghue, any exhibition of triumph might be an unsafe game; so he touched his hat, and was about to move past in silence, when Mark cried out—

"I want to speak with your master—can I see him?"

"Master!" said Wylie, and his sallow face grew sallower and sicklier. "If ye mean Mr. Hemsworth, sir——"

"Of course I do. If I spoke of Sir Marmaduke Travers, I should mean *his* master. Is he at home?"

"No, sir; he has left 'the Lodge.'"

"Left it!—since when? I saw him last night at ten o'clock."

"He left here before eleven," was Wylie's answer.

"When is he expected back?"

"Not for a week, at soonest, sir. It may be even longer, if, as he said, it were necessary for him to go to England."

"To England!" exclaimed Mark, in bitter disappointment, for in the distance the hope of speedy vengeance seemed all but annihilated. "What is his address in Dublin?" said he, recovering himself.

"To the office of the Upper Secretary, sir, I am to address all his letters," said Wylie, for the first time venturing on a slight approach to a smile.

"His hotel, I mean. Where does he stop in the city?"

"He usually stays in the Lower Castle-yard, sir, when in town, and probably will be there now, as the Privy Council is sitting, and they may want to examine him."

The slow measured tone in which these few words were uttered gave them a direct application to Mark himself, which made him flush deeply. He stood for a few seconds, seemingly in doubt, and then turned his steps towards home.

"Did you hear what the young O'Donoghue said, there, as he passed?" said Wylie to a labouring man who stood gazing after the youth.

"I did, faix," replied the other; "I heerd it plain enough."

"Tell me the words, Pat—I'd like to hear them."

"'Tis what he said—'He's escaped me this time; but, by G—, he'll not have the same luck always.'"

"It was Mr. Hemsworth he was after," said Wylie. "It was him he meant."

"To be sure it was; didn't I hear him asking after him."

"All right—so you did," added Wylie, nodding. "Take care you don't forget the words, that's all, and here's the price of a glass to keep your memory fresh."

And he chucked a sixpence to the man, who, as he caught it, gave a look of shrewd intelligence, that showed he felt there was a compact between them.

Mark moved homewards in deep thought. There was a time when disappointment would have irritated him rather than have suggested any new expedient for success. Now he was changed in this respect. If baffled, he did not feel defeated. His first anger over, he began to think how best he should obtain a meeting with Hemsworth, and a retractation of his calumnies against himself. To venture back to Dublin would have been unsafe on every account. The informations sworn against him by Lanty Lawler might be at any moment used for his capture. In Glenflesk alone was he safe; so long as he remained there, no force Government would think of sending against him could avail; nor was it likely, for the sake of so humble an individual as himself, that they would take measures which would have the effect of disclosing their knowledge of the plot, and thus warn other and more important persons of the approaching danger. Mark's first determination to leave home at once, was thus altered by these casual circumstances. He must await Hemsworth's return, since, without the explanation he looked for, he never could bring himself to take leave of his friends. As he pondered thus, a servant in Hemsworth's livery rode rapidly past him. Mark looked suddenly up, and perceived, with some surprise, from the train of dust upon the road, that the man was coming from Carrig-na-curra. Slight as the incident was, he turned his thoughts from his own fortunes to fix them on those of his cousin Kate. By what magic this man Hemsworth had won favour in her eyes he could not conceive. That he should have overcome all the prejudices of his father was strange enough; but that Kate, whose opinions of people seldom or ever underwent a change, and who of all others professed to dislike that very plausibility of manner which Hemsworth possessed, that she could forgive and forget the tyrannies with which his name was associated—she whose spirit no sordid bait could tempt, nor any mean

object of personal ambition bias—this was, indeed, inexplicable. Twice or thrice a thought flashed across him, if it should not be true,—if it were merely one of those rumours which the world builds on circumstances,—that Hemsworth's intimacy was the sole foundation for the report, and the friendly interchange of visits the only reason for the story.

"I must know this," said Mark; "it may not be too late to save her. I may have come back in the very nick of time, and if so, I shall deem this piece of fortune more than enough to requite all the mischances of my life."

As he spoke thus he had reached the little flower-garden, which, in front of the tower, was the only spot of cultivation around the old building. His eye wandered over the evidences of care, few and slight as they were, with pleasant thoughts of her who suggested the culture, when at the turn of a walk he beheld his cousin coming slowly towards him.

"Good morrow, Mark," said she, extending her hand, and with a smile that betokened no angry memory of the preceding night; "you took but little sleep for one so much fatigued as you were."

"And you, cousin, if I mistake not, even as little. I saw a light burning in your room when day was breaking."

"An old convent habit," said she, smiling; "our matins used to be as early."

A low, soft sigh followed this speech.

"Yes," said Mark, "you have reason to regret it; your life was happier there; you had the pleasure of thinking, that many a mile away in this remote land, there were relatives and friends to whom you were dear, and of whom you might feel proud; sad experience has told you how unworthy we are of your affection, how much beneath your esteem. The cold realities that strip life of its ideal happiness are only endurable when age has blunted our affections and chilled our hearts. In youth their poignancy is agony itself. Yes, Kate, I can dare to say it, even to you, would that you had never come amongst us."

"I will not misunderstand you, Mark; I will not affect to think that, in your speech, there is any want of affection for me; I will take it as you mean it, that it had been better for me; and, even on your own showing, I tell you, nay. If I have shed some tears within these old walls, yet have my brightest hours been passed within them. Never, until I came here, did I know what it was to minister to another's happiness; never did I feel before the ecstacy of being able to make joy more pleasurable, and sorrow less afflicting. The daughter feeling has

filled up what was once a void in my poor heart; and when you pity me for this life of loneliness, my pulse has throbbed with delight to think how a duty, rendered by one as humble and insignificant as I am, can ennoble life, and make of this quiet valley a scene of active enjoyment."

"So you are happy here, Kate," said he, taking her hand, "and would not wish to leave it?"

"No, Mark, never; there would be no end to my ambition were the great world open to me, and the prizes all glittering before me—ambitions which should take the shape not of personal aggrandizement, but high hope for objects that come not within a woman's sphere. Here, affection sways me; there, it might be prejudice or passion."

"Ambition!" muttered Mark, catching at the word; "ambition, the penalty you pay for it is far too high; and were the gain certain, it is dearly bought by a heart dead to all purer emotions, cold to every affection of family and kindred, and a spirit made suspecting by treachery. No, Kate, no, the humblest peasant on that mountain, whose toil is for his daily bread, whose last hope at night is for the health that on the morrow shall sustain more labour, he, has a nobler life than those who nourish high desires by trading on the crimes and faults of others. I had ambition once; God knows, it grew not in me from any unworthy hope of personal advantage. I thought of myself then as meanly as I now do; but I dreamt, that, by means, humble and unworthy as mine, great events have been sometimes set in motion. The spark that ignites the train is insignificant enough in itself, though the explosion may rend the solid masonry that has endured for ages. Well, well, the dream is over now; let us speak of something else. Tell me of Herbert, Kate. What success has he met with in the University?"

"He failed the first time, but the second trial made ample amends for that defeat. He carried away both prizes from his competitors, Mark, and stands now, confessedly, the most distinguished youth of his day; disappointment only nerved his courage. There was a failure to avenge, as well as a goal to win, and he has accomplished both."

"Happy fellow, that his career in life could depend on efforts of his own making—who needed but to trust his own firm resolve, and his own steady pursuit of success, and cared not how others might plot, and plan, and intrigue around him."

"Very true, Mark; the prizes of intellectual ambition have this advantage, that they are self won; but, bethink you, are not other objects equally noble—are not the efforts we make for others more worthy of

fame than those which are dictated by purely personal desire of distinction ?"

Mark almost started at the words, whose direct application to himself could not be doubted, and his cheek flushed, partly with pride, partly with shame.

"Yes," said he, after a brief pause, "these are noble themes, and can stir a heart as sorrow-struck as mine—but the paths that lead upwards, Kate, are dark and crooked—the guides that traverse them are false and treacherous."

"You have, indeed, found them so," said Kate, with a deep sigh.

"How do you mean, I have found them so?" cried Mark, in amazement at the words.

"I mean what I have said, Mark, that betrayal and treachery have tracked you for many a day. You would not trust me with your secret, Mark, nor yet confide in me, when an accident left it in my possession. Chance has revealed to me many circumstances of your fortune, and even now, Mark, I am only fearful lest your own prejudices should hazard your safety. Shall I go on ? May I speak still more plainly?"

Mark nodded, and she resumed—

"One who never favoured the cause you adopted, probably from the very confederates it necessitated—yet saw with sympathy how much truth and honour were involved in the struggle, has long watched over you—stretching out, unseen, the hand to help, and the shield to protect you. He saw in you the generous boldness of one whose courage supplies the nerve, that mere plotters trade upon, but never possess. He saw, that once in the current, you would be swept along, while they would watch you from the shore. He, I say, saw this, and with a generosity the greater, because no feelings of friendship swayed him, he came forward to save you."

"And this unseen benefactor," said Mark, with a proud look of scornful meaning, "his name is——"

"I will not speak it, if you ask me thus," said Kate, blushing, for she read in his glance the imputation his heart was full of. "Could you so far divest yourself of prejudice as to hear calmly, and speak dispassionately, I could tell you anything—everything, Mark."

"No, Kate, no," said he, smiling dubiously; "I have no right to ask, perhaps not to accept of such a confidence."

"Be it so, then," said she, proudly, "we will speak of this no more; and with a slight bow, and a motion of her hand, she turned into another alley of the garden, and left Mark silently musing over the scene. Scarcely, however, had she screened herself from his view by

the intervening trees, than she hastened her steps, and soon gained the house. Without stopping to take breath, she ascended the stairs, and tapped at Sir Archy's door.

"Come in, my sweet Kate," said he, in his blandest voice, "I should know that gentle tap amid a thousand; but, my dear child, why so pale?—what has agitated you?—sit down and tell me."

"Read this, sir," said she, taking a letter from the folds of her handkerchief—"this well tell you all, shorter and more collectedly than I can. I want your advice and counsel, and quickly too, for no time is to be lost.

"This is Mr. Hemsworth's writing," said Sir Archy, as he adjusted his spectacles to read. "When did you receive it?"

"About an hour ago," answered Kate, half impatient at the unhurried coolness of the old man's manner, who at last proceeded to examine the epistle, but without the slightest show of anxiety or eagerness. His apathy was, however, short-lived—short expressions of surprise broke from him, followed by exclamations of terror and dismay, till at length, laying down the letter, he said, "Leave me, sweet Kate, leave me to read and reflect on this alone; be assured I'll lose no time in making up my mind about it, for I see that hours are precious here." And as she glided from the room, Sir Archy placed the open letter on a table before him, and sat down diligently to re-consider its contents.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"HEMSWORTH'S LETTER."

THE letter, over which Sir Archy bent in deep thought, was from Hemsworth. It was dated from the night before, and addressed to Kate O'Donoghue, and, although professing to have been hurriedly written, an observer, as acute as Sir Archy, could detect ample evidence of great care and consideration in its composition. Statements seemingly clear and open, were in reality confused and vague; assertions were qualified, and, in lieu of direct and positive information, there were scattered

throughout, hopes, and fears, wishes, and expectations, all capable of being sustained, whatever the issue of the affair they referred to.

The letter opened with a respectful apology for addressing Miss O'Donoghue; but pleading that the urgency of the case, and the motives of the writer, might be received as a sufficient excuse. After stating, in sufficiently vague terms, to make the explanation capable of a double meaning, the reasons for selecting her, and not either of her uncles, for the correspondence, it entered at once upon the matter of the communication, in these words :—

"I have hesitated and doubted, Miss O'Donoghue, how far my interference in the affairs of your family may be misconstrued, and whether the prejudices which were once entertained to my disadvantage might not now be evoked to give a false colouring to my actions. These doubts I have resolved, by reflecting that they are for the most part personal, and that if I succeed in rendering real service, the question is comparatively indifferent what light or shadow it may seem to throw on my conduct. A candid and impartial judgment I certainly look to from *you*, and I confess myself at liberty to lay less store by the opinions of others."

Continuing for a brief space in this strain, the letter went on to mention that the sudden return of Mark had left the writer no alternative but to venture on this correspondence, whatever the consequences—consequences which, the writer palpably inferred, might prove of the last moment to himself. The explanation—and, for the reader's sake, it is better to spare him Hemsworth's involved narrative, and merely give its substance—was chiefly, that information of Mark O'Donoghue's complicity in the plot of the United Irish party had been tendered to Government, and supported by such evidence that a Judge's warrant was issued for his apprehension and the seizure of all his papers; partly from friendly interference—this was dubiously and delicately put by Hemsworth—and partly from the fact that his extreme youth and ignorance of the real views of the insurgents were pleaded in his favour, the execution of this warrant was delayed, and the young man suffered to go at large. So long as he withdrew himself from the company of the other conspirators, and avoided publicity, the Government was willing to wink at the past. It had been, however, determined on, that should he either be found mixed up with any of the leaders of the movement in future, or should he venture to return to Glenflesk, where his influence amongst the peasantry was well known to, and apprehended by the Government, then there should no longer be any hesitation in the line to be followed. He was immediately to be

apprehended and sent up under a sufficient escort to Dublin, to take his trial, with five others, for high treason. The proofs of his guilt were unquestionable, consisting of letters written and received, conversations to which witnesses could depose, as well as an intimacy for months long with Barrington, whose active participation in the schemes of rebellion was as well known, as the notorious fact of his being a convicted felon. To found a hope upon his innocence was thus shown to be perfectly impossible. His most trusted associates were the evidence against him; documents in his hand-writing were also in the hands of the law-officers of the Crown, and, in fact, far more than enough to bring him to the scaffold.

Hemsworth, who gently hinted all through, how far his interference had been beneficial, was one of those entrusted with Mark's arrest, should he ever dare to re-appear in his native country. The orders of the Privy Council on this score were positive and clear, and admitted of no possible misconception.

"You may judge, then," continued he, "what were my feelings on seeing him suddenly enter the house last night—to think that, while I was enjoying the pleasure of your society, and the hospitable attentions of your home, I had actually in my pocket at the moment the official order to apprehend the eldest son of my entertainer—the friend and companion of your childhood—to bring grief and mourning beneath the roof where I had passed so many happy hours—to dispel all the dreams I had begun to nourish of a neighbourhood connected by ties of kindness and good will. I had to choose between the alternative of this, or else, by a palpable avoidance of my duty, criminate myself, and leave my conduct open to the most dangerous comments of my enemies. The latter involved only myself. I have adopted it, and before this letter reaches your hands, I shall be on my way up to Dublin, nominally to attend the Council, but in reality to escape the necessity my onerous position would impose. None save those beneath your roof know that I have met Mr. Mark O'Donoghue, and I shall be half-way to Dublin before his arrival in the country is suspected. So much, in brief, for the past and the present. Now for the future. There are two courses open to this young gentleman, or to those who would serve and befriend him. One is, by a free and unlimited confession to the Government of all the circumstances of the plot, so far as they have come to his knowledge, the parties interested, their several shares in the undertaking, with every detail of date and time, to sue for a pardon for himself—a grace which, I need scarcely say, I will use all my influence to obtain. The other mode is, by a temporary exile; to

withdraw himself from the notice of the Government, until the danger having perfectly passed over, political acrimony will have abated, and the necessity for making severe examples of guilt be no longer urgent. This latter course I opine to be preferable, on many grounds. It demands no sacrifice of private feeling—no surrender of honour. It merely provides for safety, reserving the future untrammelled by any pledge. Neither need the absence be long; a year or two at farthest; the probabilities are, that with their present knowledge of the schemes of the insurgents, the Government can either precipitate events, or retard and protract them at will. Their policy, in this respect, depending on the rank and importance of those who, by either line of procedure, would be delivered into their hands. Arguing from what they have already done, I should pronounce it likely that their game will be to wait, to weaken the hopes and break the spirit of the United party, by frequent defections; to sow distrust and suspicion amongst them, and thus, while avoiding the necessity of bloodshed, to wear out rebellion by a long and lingering fear. If, then, others, whose age and position involved a greater prominence in these schemes, would require a longer banishment to erase the memory of the acts, your young relative, who has both youth and its rashness to plead for him, need not reckon on so lengthened an absence from his native land.

"Above all things, however, remember that not an hour is to be lost. Any moment may disclose to the Crown some new feature of the plot, and may call forth measures of stringent severity. The proclamation offering a reward for the apprehension of four persons, of whom your cousin is one, is already printed, and in the office of the Secretary. An hour would see it all over the walls of the capital, in a day or two more, it would reach every remote corner of the land. Then, all efforts on my part would be ineffectual, were they even possible. Reflect on this. It is not a mere question of fine or even imprisonment. It is life itself is on the issue, and life which, in surrendering, will blast a great name with dishonour, and a great house with obloquy and shame; for there has been no struggle, no effort, no bold and generous exposure to danger, to palliate treason, and gloss over its faults. All has been plotting and contriving for alien assistance and foreign help; no self-reliance, no patriotism, which, if mistaken, was still sincere and manly. Reflect on all this, and think that a life offered up in such a cause has no martyrdom to throw lustre on the grave shared with the felon and the highwayman. Forgive me if, in the warmth of my zeal, I have said one word which may offend. If I had not spoken thus forcibly, I should be a traitor to my own heart.

"I have written hurriedly, and I doubt not, in some respects, unadvisedly; but the sincerity of my purpose will plead for me, should the indiscretion of my zeal require apology. You will, perhaps, ask why I should have imposed a task difficult as this upon you—why I should have loaded you with a responsibility so weighty? My answer is simply, I dared not write to the O'Donoghue on the subject of his son's indiscretion—to impugn the acts of the young man, would be to forfeit all influence with the old one. You will then say, why not address Sir Archibald? For the simple reason, that the prejudices of his country are too strong in him to make due allowances for those who err from excitable or impetuous natures; not only would he judge too harshly of Mark, but he would be anxious to record that judgment as a warning to Herbert, for whom alone he is interested. I therefore make it a strenuous request—nay, more, I esteem it as the term of a compact between us, that you do not show this letter either to the O'Donoghue or to his brother. I have expressed myself openly and candidly to you, but with a tacit assurance that my confidence is not to be extended to others. In the part I have taken, I already incur considerable risk. This is a period when loyalty cannot afford to be even suspected; yet have I jeoparded mine in befriending this youth. I now conclude, dear madam, assuring you that any danger I incur, or any anxiety I feel, will be amply repaid if I only know that you think not unworthily of

"WILLIAM HEMSWORTH."

Sir Archy studied this letter with the patient care a lawyer bestows upon a brief. He thought over each sentence, and weighed the expressions in his mind with deep thought. It had been his fortune, in early life, to have been thrown into situations of no common difficulty, and his mind had, in consequence, acquired a habit of shrewd and piercing investigation, which, though long disused, was not altogether forgotten; by the aid of this faculty, Hemsworth's letter appeared to him in a very different light from that in which Kate viewed it. The knowledge of every circumstance concerning Mark evinced an anxiety which he was very far from attributing to motives of friendship. Sir Archy well knew the feelings of dislike which subsisted between these two men—how then account for this sudden change on Hemsworth's part?—to what attribute this wonderful interest concerning him?

"Let us see," said the old man to himself, "let us see the fruit, and then we may pronounce upon the tree. Where and to what does Hemsworth's benevolence point, dishonour or banishment? Such are

the terms he offers; such are the alternatives his kindness suggests. Might these have no other motive than friendship?—might they not be the offspring of feelings very different indeed? What benefit might he derive from Mark's expatriation—that is the question? Does he anticipate easier terms with the old man for the little remnant of property that still pertains to him—or is it merely the leaven of the old hate that still rises in his nature?—or"——and here his eye flashed with brilliancy as a new thought crossed his brain——"or does he suspect Mark of occupying a place in his cousin's affection, and is rivalry the source of this mysterious good nature?"

This suspicion no sooner occurred to him than Sir Archy recalled to mind all the circumstances of Hemsworth's recent behaviour—the endeavours he had made to recommend himself to their favourable notice—all his acts to ingratiate himself with Kate—the ample views he affected in politics—the wide-spread generosity of his plans for the amelioration of the people. That his conduct was unreal, that his principles were but assumed for the occasion, the shrewd Scotchman had long suspected; and this letter, so far from dispelling the doubts, increased them tenfold. Besides this, there seemed some reason to fear that Kate was not quite indifferent to him. The disparity of years was so far in his favour, as she could not but feel flattered by the notice of one so conversant with the world and its ways, who had travelled and seen so much, and might in every respect be deemed a competent judge in matters of taste. Any comparison of him with Mark must redound with great advantage to the former. The accomplished scholar, the agreeable and well-bred man of society, was a severe competitor for the half-educated and slovenly youth, whose awkward and bashful manner seemed rather ill-temper than mere diffidence. Mark was himself conscious of the disadvantages he laboured under, and although Sir Archy had few fears that such an admirer was likely to win favour with the gay and capricious girl, whose foreign habits had taught her to value social qualities at the highest price, still, there was a chance that Hemsworth might have thought differently, and that jealousy was the secret of the whole scheme. Kate, with her ten thousand pounds of a rent-charge, might be a very reasonable object of Hemsworth's ambition; and when already he had absorbed so large a portion of the family estates, this additional lien would nearly make him master of the entire. It was, then, perfectly possible that this was his game, and that in withdrawing Mark from the scene, he both calculated on the gratitude his generosity would evoke, and more securely provided for his own success.

While Sir Archy thus pondered over Hemsworth's motives, he did

not neglect the more pressing consideration of Mark's danger. It was evident that he had taken an active part in the insurrectionary movement, and without the slightest precautions for his personal safety. The first care, therefore, was to see and learn from him the full extent of his danger, what proofs there existed against him, and what evidence, either in writing or otherwise, might be adduced to his disadvantage.

"Tell me, frankly and freely, Mark," said he, aloud, as he arose and paced the room; "tell me, openly, how you stand, who are your betrayers, what your dangers, and I'll answer for it the peril may be averted."

"I have come to do so, sir," said a voice behind him—and Mark O'Donoghue was standing at the door.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"TAMPERING AND PLOTTING."

WHILE they who meditated the invasion of Ireland were thoroughly informed on the state of parties, and the condition of public opinion in that kingdom, the English Government were satisfied with vague and insufficient rumours of those intentions, derived from sources of questionable accuracy, or communicated by persons in the pay of their opponents. Certain it is, neither the magnitude of the peril was appreciated, nor its nearness suspected. Many, in England, regarded the whole in the light of a menace, and believed that the embarrassments of the French Directory were quite sufficient to withdraw their thoughts from foreign aggression, to troubles nearer home. Their great want of money, arms, and all the munitions of war, was well known and trusted to as a guarantee of security. Others supposed that a rash attempt might be made, but were equally sure of its being defeated by our naval forces before a landing could be effected; and many more believed that the pretence of foreign aid was but a threat of the malcontents at home, to enforce compliance with their demands. The event itself was to show how unfounded were all these calculations, and how little reason we had to regard our security as derived from our own measures of foresight and precaution.

Constituted as the French Government of the day was, nothing would

have been easier than to have ample knowledge of all the projects. The men in high situations were newly elevated to power, from positions of very humble pretension, with no habits of public business, no experience of the mode of conducting difficult affairs, and many of them of very questionable character for integrity; and yet, with these opportunities at our disposal, a few scattered facts, ill-authenticated and vague, were all that our Government attained to; and even these were unattended to, save when they implicated the conduct of some suspected character nearer home; then, indeed, party violence assumed an appearance of statesmanlike vigilance, and crown prosecutions and ex-officio informations, seemed the safeguard of the empire.

On occasions of this kind, the activity of the Government was most remarkable, and while the great question of national security was overlooked, no pains were spared to track out the narrow path where some insignificant treason was plodding, and bring the plotter to the scaffold. Large sums of money were spent in obtaining secret information, and the whole science of government was reduced to a system of "espionage." This little-minded and narrow policy was, in a great measure, the consequence of entrusting so much of the Government to the influence of the lawyers, who, regarding everything through the light of their own profession, placed the safety of the empire on the success of a crown prosecution.

It was at a moment when this favourite policy was in the ascendant, that Hemsworth reached Dublin, little aware, indeed, how far events there, were hastening forward the catastrophe for which he was interested. Lanty Lawler, who for a long time had never communicated, save to Hemsworth, his knowledge of the United Irish movement, had, at length, become alarmed for his own safety; and putting but slight trust in Hemsworth's good faith, should any calamity befall him, had come forward and revealed to Major Sirr all that he knew of the plot, the names of several parties implicated, and in particular the whole history of Mark O'Donoghue's complicity. The information came well-timed. The crown lawyers were desirous of exhibiting the parade of a state prosecution, and all the ordinary measures were taken to secure its success. Lanty, now a prisoner in Newgate, but, with the promise of a free pardon and a reward, had been repeatedly examined by the Attorney and Solicitor-general, and his statement found perfectly accurate and consistent. He narrated the various interviews he had been present at among the Delegates in Dublin—the messages he had conveyed from them to different individuals through the country—the depots where pikes and muskets were stored, and the several places of rendezvous

agreed upon, whenever the rising should take place. He also revealed many facts of the feeling prevalent among the people, and exemplified the conflicting state of opinion then in the country—how, that many were worn out and discouraged by delay, and believed themselves betrayed by France—while others were full of hope and confidence, eager for the time to come, and ready to incur any peril. While, in all these disclosures he was most candid and explicit, he never once betrayed the name of Mary M'Kelly, nor even alluded, in any way, to her cabin, as the resort of the French spies, and the secret depot of arms and ammunition. It might have been that in the blackness of his treachery to others, this one spark of better feeling survived towards her—that some lurking affection lingered in a heart dead to every other noble sentiment, or perhaps the lesser motive swayed him, that in excepting her from the general ruin, he was securing to himself one, who as a wife, would bring him no small share of worldly wealth. Either may be the explanation of his conduct, for strange as it may seem, the vilest actions are sometimes conceived with a reserve of conscience, that shows what casuistry guilt requires, and how much the spirit of evil lacks of courage, when it has to borrow the energy to act from even the semblance of something good.

It was not without reluctance, at first, that Lanty ventured on the betrayal of Mark O'Donoghue; nor did he even consent to do so, until his own safety had been threatened by Hemsworth, and also a solemn promise given, that he should never be brought forward to give evidence against him, nor exhibited before the world as an informer. This was the character he most dreaded—it was the only reproach that had any terror for his mind. Gradually, however, and by the frequency of his revelations to Hemsworth, this dread diminished, and in proportion, the fears for his own safety increased. Hemsworth's game was to make him believe that such depended solely on him—that at any moment he could give information of a character sufficient to convict him—and by this tie was he bound to a man he detested with all his hatred. After much vacillation and doubt it was, that Lanty determined, whatever the consequences to his fame, to make a full disclosure to Government, and only bargain for his own life. Hemsworth's absence from Dublin afforded the opportunity, and he seized it at once. Such, then, was the position of affairs when Hemsworth reached the capital, and learned that his agent, Lanty, was no longer at his disposition, but at that very moment a prisoner in the gaol of Newgate, strict orders being given that nobody was to be admitted to converse with him without the special leave of the law officers of the crown. Now, although Hemsworth

had, personally, little to fear from any disclosure Lanty might make, yet his information might thwart all the plans he had so artfully devised regarding the O'Donoghues; the events impending that family being, up to that moment, perfectly at his own direction and disposal, to delay or precipitate which, constituted the essence of his policy. Mark could not be brought to trial, he well knew, without exhibiting himself in the light of an enemy and an accuser, he being the person to whom Lanty originally communicated his informations. This hostile part would form an impassible obstacle to any success with Kate, and consequently to his great plan of obtaining the Glenflesk estate.

Hemsworth lost not a moment, after his arrival in town, in his endeavours to have an interview with Lanty; and, being on terms of old intimacy with the sheriff, at length persuaded him to grant him a brief opportunity of speaking to him; a permission, under the circumstances, most reluctantly acceded. It was near nine o'clock—the latest hour at which a visit to the gaol was practicable—when Hemsworth presented himself, with the sheriff's order at the gate. A brief delay ensued, for even on such an authority, the goaler scrupled to deviate from the directions given him, and he was admitted. Following the turnkey for some minutes, through passages and across courts, they reached an angle of the building dedicated to the reception of those who were held over by the crown as "approvers" against their former friends and associates. Many of these had been in confinement several months, the time not having arrived when the evidence, which they were to corroborate, was perfected; and not a few preferring the security of a prison, to the dangers the character of an informer would expose them, to without doors. A confused noise of voices and coarse laughter was heard as they came near, and the turnkey, striking his bunch of keys against a heavy door, called, "Be silent there, b——t ye, there's more trouble with six of ye than we have with the whole condemned ward," then turning to Hemsworth, he added, in a lower voice, "them chaps is awaitin' a passage over seas—they've given their evidence long ago, and they're not wanted now. That one with the cracked voice is Cope, the fellow that tracked Parson Jackson—but here, this is your man's cell—we cannot give you more than a quarter of an hour, and so, don't lose any more time." Hemsworth laid his hand on the gaoler's arm as he extended it with the key. "One second—just wait one second," said he, "as he pressed his fingers across his brow, and seemed to reflect, then added, "Yes, that will do—open it now, and I shall be ready to retire whenever you please."

Whether the sound without had drowned the noise, or that his at-

tention was too much engaged to notice it, Lanty never stirred nor looked round, as the heavy door was unbarred, and fastened again behind Hemsworth. Seated in a recess of the window, and with his face pressed against the iron bars, he was watching, with interest, the movement in the street below, where a considerable number of people went past, their eyes directed upwards, to the front of the building, but all view of which was impossible to him. Hemsworth stood and looked at him for some minutes without speaking—he was as if calculating the very thoughts of the other's brain—then advancing gently, he laid his hand on Lawler's shoulder, as he said—

"Ay, Lanty, that's the reward they get. Two of them are to be turned off to-morrow."

"Two of whom, sir?" asked Lanty, as, starting at the voice, his face became the colour of death.

"I thought you knew!" said he, affecting astonishment; "they are the approvers against Bond. The Government has no use for the rascals now, and it saves expense to hang them; and so, they tried them for a murder at Sallins, in March last. I hear they were not there; but no matter, they've enough to answer for, without that."

"But, sure, Mr. Hemsworth, they'll never treat their own friends that way?"

"Wouldn't they, Lanty! You don't know them as well as I do. They keep little faith with scoundrels, and more fools the scoundrels for being caught; but I mustn't lose time; it was that very thing brought me here. I heard this evening the scrape you were in."

"Me, in a scrape!" exclaimed Lanty, his eyes growing wider with terror.

"To be sure it is, and a devilish ugly scrape, too, my friend: havn't you given information to the Attorney-general against the young O'Donoghue?"

Lanty nodded, and he went on—

"Havn't you confessed the whole of the plot, and told them everything?"

"Very nearly, faix!" said Lanty, dropping his head, and sighing.

"And what do you expect to gain by that, Master Lanty? Is it by showing that you are of no use to them—that you've nothing more left in you—that you hope for a reward. Is it for the sake of your family and friends, or on account of your remarkable honesty, they're so fond of you?" Then checking this sneering tone, he added, in a slow and solemn voice, "Are you a fool, man?—or don't you see what you're bringing yourself to? What will be your claim when the trial

of the young O'Donoghue is over? The crown lawyers will have you up in the witness-box till they've drained you dry. Devil a drop they'll leave in you; and when they say 'Go down,' take my word for it, it's down you'll go in earnest; and all the world wouldn't lift you up afterwards."

Hemsworth permitted the words to sink into his heart for a few seconds in silence, and then went on—

"So long as you trusted *me*, you were safe. I'd never expose you in open court."

"No, sir, nor the Attorney-general neither. He said that all they wanted was my information on oath."

"And you gave it!" exclaimed Hemsworth, in a voice of ill-dissembled anxiety.

"Not all out, sir," said Lanty, with a shrewd glance of malicious intelligence. "I asked them for a copy, to read it over before I signed it, and they gave me one"—here he produced a roll of paper from his breast pocket, and showed it to Hemsworth—"and I'm to give it back to-morrow, with my name to it."

"They've played you off well, Lanty," said Hemsworth, while, carelessly opening the paper, he affected not to pay it any attention. "The lawyers have got round you nicely; and, faith, I always thought you a clever fellow before. Your evidence, so long as it was your own, was worth five thousand pounds, and I wouldn't give five for your chance of escape, now, that they know your secret."

"What would you say if they didn't know it?" said Lanty, with a look of impudent familiarity, he had never ventured on before. "What would you say, now, if the best of my evidence was to come out yet? —that I never told one word about the French clipper that landed the muskets in Glengariff-bay, and left two pipes of wine at your own house the same night?"

"Ah! you'd try that game, would you?" said Hemsworth, with a smile of deadly malice; "but I've thought of that part, my honest Lanty. I've already given information on that very matter. You don't suppose that I afforded those fellows my protection for the sake of the bribe. No, faith!—but I made them pay for the very evidence that can any day convict them;—ay, *them* and *you*; you, a paid spy of France, a sworn United Irishman, who have administered the oaths to eighteen soldiers of the Roscommon militia, and are at this moment under a signed and witnessed contract, bound to furnish horses for a French cavalry force on their landing here in Ireland. Are these truths, Mr. Lanty, or are they mere matters of fancy?"

"I'm a crown witness," said Lawler, sturdily, "and if I speak out all I know, they're bound to protect me."

"Who is to bind them?" said Hemsworth, jeeringly: "is it your friends, the United Irishmen, that you betrayed?—is it they are to watch over your precious life?—or do you think your claims are stronger with the other party, that you only swore to massacre? Where's the sympathy and protection to come from? Tell me that, for I'm curious on the point."

Lanty turned a fierce look upon him—his eyeballs glared, and his nether lip shook convulsively, while his hands were firmly clenched together. Hemsworth watched these evidences of growing anger, but without seeming to regard them, when the key grated roughly in the lock, the door opened, and the gaoler called out, with a savage attempt at laughter—

"Time's up. I must turn you off, sir."

"A short reprieve," said Hemsworth, humouring the ruffian jest, and he pitched his purse into the fellow's hand.

"To settle family matters, I suppose," said the turnkey, with a grin, as he retired, and closed the door once more.

The interruption seemed to offer a favourable opportunity to Hemsworth of giving an amicable turn to the interview, for with a changed voice, and a look of well-assumed friendship, he said—

"I have misspent my moments here sadly, Lanty. I came to befriend you, and not to interchange words of angry meaning. If I had been in Dublin, I'm certain you would never have fallen into this perilous position. Let us see how best to escape from it. This information—I see it is all confined to young O'Donoghue's business—is of no value whatever, until signed by you. It is just as if it were never spoken. So that, if you steadily determine not to sign it, you need give no reason whatever, but simply refuse when asked. Do this, and all's safe."

"Couldn't they transport me?" said Lanty, in a feeble voice, but whose very accent betrayed the implicit trust he reposed in Hemsworth's answer.

"They'll threaten that, and worse, too; but never flinch; they've nothing against you save, your own evidence. When the time comes—mark me, I say, when the time comes—your evidence is worth five thousand pounds; but, now, all it will do is convict young O'Donoghue, and warn all the others not to go forward. I don't suppose you want that; the young fellow never did you any harm."

"Never," said Lanty, dropping his head with shame, for even in such a presence his conscience smote him.

"Very well—there's no use in bringing him to trouble. Keep your own counsel, and all will be well."

"I'm just thinking of a plan I've a notion in my head will do well," said Lanty, musingly. "I'm to see Father Kearney, the priest of Luke's Chapel, to-morrow morning—he's coming over to confess me. Well, when the Attorney-general and the others come for me to write my name, I'll just say that I dar'n't do it. I'll not tell why nor wherefore—sorra word more, but this, 'I dar'n't do it.' They'll think at once it's the priest set me against it. I know well what they'll say. That Father Kearney put me under a vow, and so they may. They'll scarcely get *him* to say much about it, and I'll take care they won't make *me*."

"That thought was worthy of you, Lanty," said Hemsworth, laughing, "but take care that you don't swerve from your determination. Remember that there is no accusation against you—not a word nor a syllable of testimony. Of course they'll threaten you with the worst consequences. You'll be told of prosecutions for perjury, and all that. Never mind—wait patiently your time. When the hour arrives, *I'll* make your bargain for you, and it will not be merely the evidence against an individual, but the disclosure of a great plot of rebellion, they must pay you for. Cockayne got four thousand pounds and a free pardon. *Your* services will rank far higher."

"If they won't bring me up in open court," said Lanty, timidly, "I'll do whatever they please."

"For that very reason you must adhere to my advice. There, now, I perceive the fellow is about to lock up for the night, and I must leave this. You may want some money from time to time. I'll take means of sending whatever you stand in need of. For the present, ten pounds will, I suppose, be sufficient."

Lanty took the money with a mixture of humility and sullenness. He felt it as a bribe rather than a gift, and he measured the services expected of him by the consideration they were costing. The turnkey's presence did not admit of further colloquy, and they parted in mutual suspicion and distrust, each speculating how far self-interest might be worked upon as the guiding principle to sway the other's actions.

"I'm scarcely sure of him yet," said Hemsworth, as he slowly returned to his hotel. "They'll stop at nothing to terrify him into signing the informations, and if the prosecution goes on, and the young O'Donoghue is convicted, the plot is blown up. The others will escape, and all my long-projected disclosures to the Government become useless. Besides, I fail where failure is of more consequence. It was to little

moment that I prevented a marriage between Travers and the girl, if I cannot make her my own; but yet, that alliance should have been thwarted on every ground of policy. It would have been to plant the Travers here on the very spot I destine for myself. No, no. I must take care that they never see Ireland more. Indeed this breaking off the marriage will prove a strong obstacle to their returning." Thus did he review his plans, sometimes congratulating himself on the success of the past, sometimes fearing for the future, but always relying with confidence on the skill of his own negociations—an ingenuity that never yet had failed him in his difficulties.

The next day was the time appointed for Lanty's final examination, and on which he was to affix his name to the informations, and Hemsworth loitered in one of the offices of the Castle, where the gossip of the morning was discussed, in no common anxiety to hear how his "protegé" had acquitted himself. As the clerks and underlings conversed among themselves on the dress or equipage of the officials who at intervals drove off towards the Park, Hemsworth, who affected to be engaged in reading a morning paper, overheard one remark to another—

"There's the devil to pay at the Council. That fellow they have in Newgate against Coyle and M'Nevin, and the rest of them, it seems, now refuses to confirm his informations. They have good reason to believe all he said was true, but they can't go on without him."

"What's the meaning of that? He was willing enough yesterday."

"They say a priest from Luke's Chapel was with him this morning, and forbid him, under any number of curses and anathemas in case of disobedience, to reveal a syllable against the 'United party.'"

"They can compel him, however. Don't you remember Cockayne did the very same thing about Jackson's business, and they brought him over to Lord Clonmel's house, and made him sign there?"

"That they did, but they'll not try the same game twice. Curran brought it out in the cross-examination, and made it appear that the witness was terrified by the crown by a threat of consequences to himself as an accomplice, and the point went very far with the jury in Jackson's favour."

Hemsworth did not wait to hear more. The great fact that Lanty was firm, was all that he cared for, and, after a few casual remarks on the morning news, he strolled forth, with all the lazy indifference of an idle man.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE BROTHERS.

AMONG the unexplained phenomena of the period is one very remarkable and, doubtless, pregnant circumstance—the species of lull or calm in the movements of the United Irish party, which was conspicuous throughout the entire of the summer and autumn of 1796. The spring opened on them with hopes high, and expectations confident. Tone's letters from Paris breathed encouragement; the embarrassments of England promised favourably for their cause; and many who wavered before, were found now willing to embrace the enterprize. To this state of ardent feeling succeeded an interval of doubt and uneasiness; conflicting statements were circulated, and mens' minds were shaken, without any apparent cause. A vague fear of betrayal and treachery gained ground; yet no one was able to trace this dread to any definite source. The result, however, was evident in the greater caution of all concerned in the scheme—a reserve, which seemed to threaten a total abandonment of the undertaking; such, at least, it appeared to those who, like Mark O'Donoghue, having few or no opportunities of intercourse with the leaders, were disposed to take their impressions from the surface of events. As for him, his correspondence had ceased with Lanty's treachery. He neither knew the real names nor addresses of those to whom he had formerly written, and had not a single acquaintance to whom he could look for advice and assistance.

All Sir Archy's endeavours to win his confidence had failed, not from any distrust either in his judgment or his good faith, but because Mark regarded his secret as a sacred depository, in which the honour of others was concerned; and however disposed to seek advice for himself, he would not compromise their safety for the sake of his own advantage. Unable to extort a confidence by entreaty, and well aware how little efficiency there lay in menace, Sir Archy abandoned the attempt, and satisfied himself by placing in Mark's hands Hemsworth's letter, significantly hinting his own doubts of the writer's integrity.

Mark sat himself down in the garden, to study the epistle; and however artfully conceived, the experience his own career opened, displayed the dishonesty of the writer at every line.

"I am the obstacle to his plans—my presence here is somehow a thwarting influence against him," said he, as he folded up the paper. "I must remain at every hazard; nor is there much, so long as I bound my wanderings by these great mountains—he will be a bolder than Hemsworth who captures me here."

Guided by this one determination, and trusting that time might clear up some of the mysteries that surrounded him, Mark waited, as men wait for an event that shall call upon their faculties or their courage for some unusual effort. The same reverses of fortune that had taught him distrust, had also inculcated the lesson of patience; but it was the patience of the Indian warrior, who will lie crouching in concealment for days long, till the moment of his vengeance has arrived. And thus, while to others he seemed an altered character, less swayed by rash impulses, and less carried away by anger, the curbed up passions became only more concentrated by repression. He mixed little with the others, rarely appearing save at meal times, and then, seldom taking any part in the conversation around. He did not absent himself from home, as before, for whole days or weeks long, but spent his time mostly in his own chamber, where he read and wrote for hours—strange and unusual habits for one who had never sought or found amusement save in the fatigues of the hunting-field. His manner, too, was no longer the same. Calmer and more self-possessed than before, he neither seemed to feel momentary bursts of high spirits or depression. The tone of his mind was indeed sad, but it was the sadness that indicated strength and constancy to endure, fully as much as it betrayed the pain of suffering. The altered features of his character impressed themselves on every thing he did; and there was an air of quiet gentleness in his demeanour, quite foreign to his former rough and abrupt manner. Upon none did these things make so great an impression as on Kate: her woman's tact enabled her to see them differently, and more correctly than the rest. She saw that a mighty change had come over him: that no mere check of disappointment, no baffled ambition, could have done this: neither could she attribute it to any feeling towards herself, for he was never more coolly distant than now. She guessed, then, rightly, that it was the first step towards freedom, of a mind enthralled by its own strong passions. It was the struggling energy to be free, of a bold and daring spirit, that learned at length to feel the lowering influences of ill-directed ambition. How ardently she wished that some career were open to him, now—some great path in life: she did not fear its dangers or its trials—his nature suggested any thing save fear! How sad to think, that energy like his should be suffered to wane, and flicker, and

die out, for want of the occasion to display its blaze. She could not avoid communicating these thoughts to Sir Archy, who for some time past had watched the growing change in the youth's manner. The old man listened attentively as she spoke, and his glistening eye and heightened colour showed how her girlish enthusiasm moved him; and while some reminiscence of the past seemed to float before him, his voice trembled as he said—

"Alas! my sweet child, the world offers few opportunities like those you speak of, and our political condition rejects them totally. The country that would be safe, must give little encouragement to the darings of youthful energy. His rewards are higher here, who seeks out some path well trod and beaten, and tries by industry and superior skill to pass by those who follow it also. The talents men prize are those available for some purpose of every-day life. Gifts that make mankind wiser and happier, these, bring fame and honour; while the meteor brilliancy of mere heroism can attract but passing wonder and astonishment."

"You mistake Mark, my dear uncle—you undervalue the change that is worked in his character. He is not deficient in ability, if he but suffer himself to rely upon it, rather than on the casual accidents of fortune. If Herbert were but here——"

"Herbert comes home to-night. I had thought to keep my secret for a surprise, but you have wrested it from me."

"Herbert coming home! Oh, how happy you have made me! The brothers once more together, how much each may benefit the other. Nay, uncle, you must not smile thus. Superior as Herbert is in the advantages that training and study impart, Mark has gifts of determination and resolve, as certain to win success. But, here he comes—may I not tell him of Herbert's coming?"

Sir Archy smiled and nodded, and the happy girl was the next moment at Mark's side, relating with delight her pleasant news.

Mark listened with pleasure to the intelligence. Any little jealousy he once felt for acquirements and attainments above his own, had long since given way to a better and more brotherly feeling; and he ardently desired to meet and converse with him again.

"And yet, Kate, how altered may he be from what we knew him. Who is to say the changes time may not have wrought in him?"

"Such are not always for the worse, Mark," said Kate, timidly, for she felt how the allusion might be taken.

A slight tinge of red coloured Mark's cheek, and his eye was lighted

with a look of pleasure. He felt the flattery in all its force, but did not dare to trust himself with a reply.

"I wonder," said he, after a lengthened pause—"I wonder how Herbert may feel on seeing, once more, our wild glen. Will these giant rocks and bold ravines appeal to his heart with the same sympathies as ever; or will the habits of the life he has left, cling to him still, and make him think this grandeur only desolation?"

"You did not feel so, surely, Mark?" said Kate, as she turned upon him a look of affectionate interest.

"Me?—I think so? No! This valley was to me a place of rest—a long sought-for haven. I came not here from the gay and brilliant world, rich in fascinations and pleasures. I had not lived among the great and learned, to hear the humble estimate they have of our poor land. I came back here like the mariner whose bark puts back shattered by the storm, and baffled by the winds, unable to stem the tide that leads to fortune. Yes, shipwrecked in every thing."

"Herbert, Herbert," cried Kate.

At the same moment a chaise, advancing at full gallop, turned from the road into the avenue towards the house. The boy caught sight of the figures in the garden, flung open the door, and springing out, rushed towards them.

"My dear, dear Kate," was his first exclamation, as he kissed her affectionately; his next, in a tone of unqualified surprise, was—"What a fine fellow you have grown, Mark!" and the two brothers were locked in each other's arms.

The sentiment which thus burst from him in the first moment of surprise, was the very counterpart of Mark's own feeling on beholding Herbert. Time had worked favourably for both. On the elder brother, the stamp of manhood more firmly impressed, had given an elevation to the expression of his features, and a character of composure to his air; while with Herbert, his career of study alternating with a life passed among cultivated and polished circles, had converted the unformed stripling into a youth of graceful and elegant demeanour. The change was even greater in him than in his brother. In the one case it was, as it were, but the growth and development of original traits of character; in the other, new and very different features were distinguishable. His thoughts, his expressions, his very accent was changed; yet through this his old nature beamed forth, bright, joyous, and affectionate as ever. It was the same spirit, although its flights were bolder and more daring—the same mind, but its workings more powerful and more free. The

one had placed his ambition so high, he scarcely dared to hope; the other had already tasted some of the enjoyments of success—life had even already shed around him some of its fascinations, and quickened the ardour of his temper. A winner in the race of intellect, he experienced that thrilling ecstasy which acknowledged superiority confers; he knew what it was to feel the mastery over others, and, even now, the flame of ambition was lighted in his heart, and its warm glow tingled in his veins and throbbed in every pulse. In vain should they who knew him once, seek for the timid, bashful boy, that scarcely dared to make an effort from very dread of failure. His flashing eye and haughty brow told of victory; still around his handsome mouth the laughing smile of happy youth showed that no ungenerous feeling, no unworthy pride, had yet mingled with his nature.

"They tell me you have swept the University of its prizes, Herbert—is not this so?" said Mark, as he leaned his arm affectionately on his shoulder.

"You would think but poorly of my triumphs, Mark," replied Herbert, with a smile. "The lists I fight in, peril not life or limb."

"Still, there is honour in the game," said Mark. "Wherever there is success on one side, and failure on the other—wherever there is hope to win, and dread to lose—there, the ambition is never unworthy."

"But what of you, Mark? Tell me of yourself. Have you left a buck in the glen, or is there a stray grouse on the mountain? What have you been doing since we met?"

Mark coloured and looked confused, when Kate, coming to the rescue, replied—

"How can you ask such a question, Herbert? What variety does life afford in this quiet valley? Is it not the very test of our happiness, that we can take no note of time? But here comes my uncle."

Herbert turned at the words, and rushed to meet the old man.

"Have you won baith, Herbert," cried he—"baith premiums? Then I must gie you twa hands, my dear boy," said he, pressing him in a fond embrace. "Were the competitors able ones? Was the victory a hard one? Tell me all, every thing about it."

And the youth, with bent down head and rapid utterance, related, in a low voice, the event of his examination.

"Go on, go on," said Sir Archy M'Nab, aloud—"tell me what followed."

And Herbert resumed in the same tone as before.

"Ha!" cried Sir Archy, in an accent of irrepressible delight, "so they said your Latin smacked of Scotland. They scented Aberdeen in it.

Well, boy, we beat them—they canna deny that. The prize is ours—the better that it was hardly fought for."

And thus they continued for some time to talk, as they walked side by side through the garden; the old man's firm step and joyous look telling of the pride that filled his heart, while Herbert poured forth in happy confidence the long-treasured thoughts that crowded his brain; nor did they cease their converse, till Kerry came to summon the youth to his father's room.

"He's awake now," said Kerry, gazing with undisguised rapture on the tall and handsome youth; and it's a proud man he ought to be this day, that has the pair like ye."

The young men smiled at the flattery, and arm in arm took their way towards the house.

CHAPTER XL.

THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM.

Once again assembled beneath that old roof, the various members of the family seemed more than ever disposed to make present happiness atone for any troubles of the past. Never was the old O'Donoghue so contented;—never did Sir Archy feel a lighter heart. Herbert's spirits were buoyant and high as present success and hope could make them; and Kate, whatever doubts might secretly have weighed upon her mind, did her utmost to contribute to the general joy;—while Mark, over whose temperament a calmer and less variable habit of thought prevailed, seemed at least more reconciled to his fortunes.

The influences of tranquillity that prevailed over the land appeared to have breathed their soothing sway over that humble dwelling, where life rolled on like an unruffled stream, each day happy with that monotony of enjoyment, so delicious to all whose minds have ever been tortured by the conflicting cares of the world.

For many a year long the O'Donoghue had not been so free from troubles. The loan he had contracted on Kate's fortune had relieved him from

his most pressing embarrassments, and left him money enough to keep other creditors at bay. Sir Archy felt already he had received the earnest of that success he so ardently desired for Herbert, and in the calm of political life, hoped that the rash scheme in which Mark had embarked was even now becoming forgotten; and that the time was not far remote when no memory of it would be treasured against him. His own experience taught him, that sage lessons may be gathered from the failures and checks of youthful ambition, and in the changed features of Mark's character he augured most favourably for the future. But of all those on whom happier prospects shone, none revelled in the enjoyment so much as Herbert. The fascinations of that new world, of which he had only caught a glimpse, hung over him like a dream. Life opened for him at a moment when he himself had won distinction, while a new passion stirred his heart, and stimulated hope to the utmost. Kate, his companion throughout every day, was not slow to perceive the lurking secret of his thoughts, and soon led him to confide them to her. Herbert had never heard of Frederick Travers's attachment to his cousin, still less, suspected he had made a proposal of marriage to her. The studied avoidance of their names among his own family was a mystery he could not solve, and he referred to Kate for the explanation.

"How strange, Kate," said he, one day, as they wandered along the glen somewhat further than usual, "how singular is this silence respecting the Travers's! I can make nothing of it. If I speak of them, no one speaks again—if I allude to them, the conversation suddenly stops. Tell me, if you know it, the secret of all this."

Kate blushed deeply, and muttered something about old and half-remembered grudges, but he interrupted her quickly, saying—

"This can scarcely be the reason;—at least their feelings show nothing of the kind towards us. Sybella talks of you as a sister nearest to her heart. Sir Marmaduke never spoke of you, but with the warmest terms of affection, and if the gay Guardsman did not express himself on the subject, perhaps it was because he felt the more deeply."

Kate's cheek grew deeper scarlet, and her breathing more hurried, but she made no reply.

"*My* explanation," continued Herbert, more occupied with his own thoughts than attentive to his companion, "is this;—and, to be sure, it is a very sorry explanation which elucidates nothing;—that Hemsworth is somehow at the bottom of it all. Sybella told me what persuasions he employed to prevent her father returning to Glenflesk; and

when every thing like argument failed, that he actually, under pretence of enlarging the house, rendered the existing part uninhabitable."

"But what object could he have in this?" said Kate, who felt that Herbert was merely nourishing the old prejudices of his family against Hemsworth. "He is anxious for the peace and welfare of this country—he grieves for the poverty and privations of the people, and whether he be correct or not, deems the remedy, the residence amongst them of a cultivated and wealthy proprietary, with intelligence to perceive, and ability to redress their grievances."

"Very true, Kate," replied Herbert; "but don't you see that in these very requisites of a resident gentry, he does not point at the Travers family, whose ignorance of Ireland he often exposed when affecting to eulogise their knowledge. The qualities he recommends he believes to be his own."

"No, Herbert, you wrong him there," said she, warmly; "he told me himself the unceasing regret he suffered, that, in his humble sphere, all efforts for the people's good were ineffectual—that, wanting the influence which property confers, benefits from his hands became suspected, and measures of mere justice were regarded as acts of cruelty and oppression."

"Well, I only know that such is Frederick Travers's opinion of him," said Herbert, not a little piqued at Kate's unexpected defence of their ancient enemy. "Frederick told me himself that he would never cease until his father promised to withdraw the agency from him. Indeed, he is only prevented from pressing the point, because Hemsworth has got a long lease of part of the estate, which they desire to have back again on any terms. The land was let at a nominal rent, as being almost valueless. The best part of the valley it turns out to be!—the very approach to "the Lodge" passes through it—so that, as Frederick says, they could not reach their hall-door without a trespass, if Hemsworth pleased to turn sulky."

Kate felt there might be another and more correct explanation of Frederick's dislike, but she did not dare to hint at it.

"You are too favourable in your opinion of Hemsworth, Kate. Sybella said as much to me herself."

"Sybella said so?" said Kate, as a flush, half of shame, half of displeasure, mantled her cheek.

"Yes," cried Herbert, for he felt that he was in a difficulty, and there was no way out save the bold one, of right through it; "yes, she saw what you did not, that Hemsworth had dared to lift his eyes to you—that all his displays of patriotic sentiment were got up to attract your favourable

notice, and that in his arguments with Frederick about Ireland, his whole aim was to expose the Guardsman's ignorance, and throw ridicule upon it, neither seeking to convey sound notions, nor combat erroneous impressions."

"Captain Travers was but too easy a mark for such weapons," said Kate, angrily. "It was his pleasure to make Ireland the object of his sarcasm."

"So Hemsworth contrived it!" cried Herbert, eagerly, for it was a subject of which he had long been anxious to speak, and one he had heard much of from Sybella. "I know well the game he played, and how successfully too."

Kate blushed deeply; for a moment she believed that her own secret was known to Herbert, but the next instant she was reassured that all was safe.

"Sybella told me how he actually lay in wait for opportunities to entice Frederick into discussion before you, well knowing the themes that would irritate him, and calculating how far petty refutations, and half-suppressed sneers would embarrass and annoy him—the more, because Frederick saw how much more favourably you regarded Hemsworth's sentiments than his own; and, indeed, sometimes I fancied, Kate, it was a point the Guardsman was very tender about;—nay, sweet cousin, I would not say a word to offend you."

"Then, do not speak of this again, Herbert," said she, in a low voice.

"It is a luckless land," said Herbert, sighing. "They who know it well are satisfied with the cheap patriotism of declaiming on its wrongs. They who feel most acutely for its sorrows, are, for the most part, too ignorant to alleviate them. I begin to think my uncle is quite right—that the best thing we could do would be to make a truce—to draw the game—for some twenty or thirty years, and try if the new generation might not prove wiser in expedients than their fathers."

"A luckless land, indeed!" said Mark, who, coming up at the moment, had overheard the last words. "You were right to call it so—where the son of an O'Donoghue sees no more glorious path to follow than that of a hollow compromise!"

Kate and Herbert started as he spoke, and while her face flashed with an emotion of mingled pride and shame, Herbert looked abashed, and almost angry at the reproach.

"Forgive me, Herbert," said Mark, in a voice of deep melancholy. "Not even this theme should sow a difference between us. I came to bid you good-bye."

"Good-bye, Mark?" cried Kate, starting with terrified surprise.

"Going to leave us, Mark!" exclaimed Herbert, in an accent of true sorrow.

"It is but for a few days—at least I hope that it will be no more," said Mark. But I have received intelligence that makes it necessary for me to remain in concealment for a short time. You see, Herbert," said he, laughing, "that your theory has the advantage on the score of prudence. Had I followed it, the chances are, I should not have occupied the attention of his Majesty's Privy Council."

"The Privy Council! I don't understand this, Mark."

"Perhaps this is the easiest mode of explaining it," said Mark, as he unfolded a printed paper, headed "Treason—Reward for the apprehension of Mark O'Donoghue, Esq., or such information as may lead to his capture." "Is that enough? Come, come—I have no time for long stories just now. If you want to hear mine about the matter, you must visit me at my retreat—the low shealing at the west of Hungry Mountain. At least, for the present I shall remain there."

"But is this necessary, Mark? Are you certain that any thing more is meant than to threaten?" said Kate.

"I believe that Carrig-na-curra will be searched by a military force to-night, or to-morrow at farthest—that the bribe has tempted three or four—none of our people—don't mistake me—to set on my track. If my remaining would spare my father's house the indignity of a search—or if the country had any better cause at heart than that of one so valueless as I am, I would stay, Kate ——"

"No, no, Mark. This were but madness, unworthy of you, unjust to all who love you."

The last few words were uttered so faintly, as only to be heard by him alone; and as she spoke them a heavy tear rolled down her cheek, now pale as marble.

"But surely, Mark," said Herbert, who never suspected any thing of his brother's intrigues, "this must proceed on mere falsehood. There is no charge against you—you, whose life of quiet retirement here can defy any calumny."

"But not deny the truth," said Mark, with a sorrowful smile. "Once for all, I cannot speak of these things now. My time is running fast; and already my guide, yonder, looks impatient at my delay. Remember the shealing at the foot of the mountain. If there be any mist about, you have but to whistle."

"Is poor Terry your guide, then?" said Kate, affecting to smile with some semblance of tranquillity.

"My guide and my host both," said Mark, gaily. "It's the only

invitation I have received for Christmas, and I accept it most willingly, I assure you."

An impatient gesture of Terry's hand, as he stood on a small pinnacle of rock, about fifty feet above the road, attracted Mark's attention, and he called out—

"Well!—what is it?"

"The dragoons!" shouted Terry, in a terrified voice. "They're crossing the ford at Caher-mohill, two miles off—eight, nine, ten—ay, there's twelve now, over; and the fellow in the dark coat, he's another. Wait! they're asking the way: that's it, I'm sure. Well done!—my blessing be an ye this day, whoever ye are. May I never! if he's not sending them wrong! They're down the glen towards Killarney;" and as he finished speaking he sprang from the height, and hastened down the precipice at a rate that seemed to threaten destruction at every step.

"Even so, Terry. We have not more time than we need. It's a long journey to the west of the mountain; and so, good-bye, my dear cousin. Good-bye, Herbert. A short absence it will be, I trust;" and, tearing himself away hurriedly, lest any evidence of emotion might be seen, the young man ascended the steep pathway after Terry; nor did he turn his head round, until distance enabled him to look down unnoticed, when again he cried out "Farewell! Remember the west side of Hungry!" and waving his cap, disappeared, while Herbert and his cousin wended their sorrowful way homeward.

CHAPTER XLI.

"A DISCOVREY."

WHEN Kate arrived at home, she found a note awaiting her, in Hemsworth's hand-writing, and marked "haste." Guessing at once to what it must refer, she broke the seal, with an anxious heart, and read:—

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"I have been unable to retard any longer the course of proceedings against your cousin. It would seem that the charges against him are

far more grave and menacing than either of us anticipated, at least so far as I can collect from the information before me. The Privy Council has determined on arresting him at once. Orders to support the warrant by a military force have been transmitted to officers commanding parties in different towns of the south, and there is no longer a question of the intentions of the crown regarding him. But one, of two, chances is now open to him—to surrender and take his trial—or, should he, as he may, without any imputation on his courage, dread this, to make his escape to the coast, near Kenmare, where a lugger will lie off, on Wednesday night. By this means he will be able to reach some port in France or Flanders; or, probably, should the wind change, obtain protection from some of the American vessels, which are reported as cruising to the westward.

"In making this communication to you, I need scarcely observe the implicit faith I repose in the use you make of it. It is intended to be the means of providing for your cousin's safety—but should it, by any accident, fall under other eyes than yours, it would prove the inevitable ruin of your very devoted servant,

"Wm. Hemsworth."

"And they will not believe this man's integrity?" exclaimed Kate, as she finished reading the note. "He who jeopardies his own station and character for the sake of one actually his enemy! Well, *their* injustice shall not involve *my* honor. "Was it you brought this letter?" said she to Wylie, who stood, hat in hand, at the door.

"Yes, my lady, and I was told there might, perhaps, be an answer."

"No—there is none; say 'very well'—that I have read it. Where is Mr. Hemsworth?"

"At Macroom. There was a meeting of magistrates there, which delayed him, and he wrote this note, and sent me on, instead of coming himself."

"Say, that I shall be happy to see him—that's enough," said Kate, hurriedly, and turned back again into the house.

Through all the difficulties that beset her path hitherto, she had found Sir Archy an able and a willing adviser; but now, the time was come, when not only must she act independently of his aid, but, perhaps, in actual opposition to his views—taking for her guidance one distrusted by almost every member of her family. Yet what alternative remained—how betray Hemsworth's conduct in a case which, if known, must exhibit him as false to the Government, and acting secretly against the very orders that were given to him? This, she could not

think of, and thus by the force of circumstances, was constrained to accept of Hemsworth as an ally. Her anxious deliberations on this score were suddenly interrupted by the sound of horses galloping on the road, and as she looked out, the individual in question rode up the causeway, followed by his groom.

The O'Donoghue was alone in the drawing-room, musing over the sad events which necessitated Mark's concealment, when Hemsworth entered, heated by a long and fast ride.

"Is your son at home, sir—your eldest son?" said he, as soon as a very brief greeting was over.

"If you'll kindly ring that bell, which my gout won't permit me to reach, we'll inquire," said the old man, with a well-affected indifference.

"I must not create any suspicion among the servants," said Hemsworth, cautiously, "I have reason to believe that some danger is impending over him, and that he had better leave this house for a day or two."

The apparent frankness of the tone in which he spoke, threw the O'Donoghue completely off his guard, and taking Hemsworth's hand, he said—

"Thank you sincerely for this, the poor boy got wind of it this morning, and I trust before now, has reached some place of safety for the present—but what steps can we take?—is there anything you can advise us to do?—I'm really so bewildered by all I hear, and so doubtful of what is true and what false, that I'm incapable of an opinion. Here comes the only clear head amongst us. Kate, my sweet child, Mr. Hemsworth, like a kind friend, has come over about this affair of Mark's —will you and Sir Archy talk it over with him?"

"I beg your pardon for the interruption, sir, but I must recall to your memory that I am a magistrate, charged with your son's arrest, and if by an unguarded expression," here he smiled significantly, "I have betrayed my instructions—I rely on your honour not to expose me to the consequences."

The O'Donoghue listened, without thoroughly comprehending the distinction the other aimed at, and then, as if disliking the trouble of a thought that puzzled him—he shook his head and muttered, "Aye, very well—be it so—my niece knows these matters better than I do."

"I agree with that opinion, perfectly," said Hemsworth, in an undertone, "and if Miss O'Donoghue will favor me with her company for a few minutes in the garden, I may be able to assist her to a clear understanding of the case." Kate smiled assentingly, and Hemsworth

moved towards the door and opened it; and then, as if after a momentary struggle with his own diffidence, he offered her his arm; this Kate declined, and they walked along, side by side.

They had nearly reached the middle of the garden before Hemsworth broke silence. At last he said, with a deep sigh—"I fear we are too late Miss O'Donoghue. The zeal, real or affected, of the country magistrates, has stimulated them to the utmost. There are spies over the whole country—he will inevitably be taken."

Kate re-echoed the last words in an accent of deep anguish, and was silent.

"Yes," resumed he, "escape is all but impossible—for even if he should get to sea, there are two cruisers on the look-out for any suspicious sail.

"And what if he were to surrender and stand his trial," said Kate, boldly.

Hemsworth shook his head sorrowfully, but never spoke.

"What object can it be with any Government to hunt down a rash, inexperienced youth, whose unguarded boldness has led him to ruin? On whom would such an example tell, or where would the lesson spread terror, save beneath that old roof yonder, where sorrows are rife enough already?"

"The correspondence with France—that's his danger. The intercourse with the disturbed party at home might be palliated by his youth—the foreign conspiracy admits of little apology."

"And what evidence have they of this?"

"Alas! but too much—the table of the Privy Council was actually covered with copies of letters and documents—some, written by himself—almost all, referring to him as a confidential and trusty agent of the cause. This cannot be forgiven him! When I heard a member of the Council say, 'Jackson's blood is dried up already,' I guessed the dreadful result of this young man's capture.

Kate shuddered at these words, which were uttered in a faint tone, tremulous through emotion. "Oh, God," she cried, "do not let this calamity fall upon us. Poverty, destitution, banishment, anything, save the death of a felon!"

Hemsworth pressed his handkerchief to his eyes, and looked away, as the young girl, with upturned face, muttered a brief but fervent prayer to heaven.

"But you, so gifted and experienced in the world's ways," cried she, turning on him a glance of imploring meaning—"can you not think of anything? Is there no means, however difficult and dangerous, by

which he might be saved? Could not the honor of an ancient house plead for him? Is there no pledge for the future could avail him."

"There is but one such pledge—and that"—here he stopped and blushed deeply, and then, as if by an effort, resumed—"Do not, I beseech you, tempt me to utter what, if once spoken, decides the destiny of my life?"

He ceased, and she bent on him a look of wondering astonishment. She thought she had not heard him aright, and amid her fears of some vague kind, a faint hope struggled, that a chance of saving Mark yet remained. Perhaps, the mere expression of doubt her features assumed, was more chilling than even a look of displeasure, for Hemsworth's self possession, for several minutes, seemed to have deserted him; when, at last recovering himself, he said—

"Pray, think no more of my words, I spoke them rashly. I know of no means of befriending this young man. He rejected my counsels when they might have served him. I find how impossible it is to win confidence from those whose prejudices have been fostered in adverse circumstances. Now, I am too late—my humble task is merely to offer you some advice, which the day of calamity may recall to your memory. The Government intends to make a severe example of his case. I heard so much, by accident, from the Under Secretary. They will proceed, in the event of his conviction—of which there cannot be a doubt—to measures of confiscation regarding his property—timely intervention might be of service here."

This additional threat of misfortune did not seem to present so many terrors to Kate's mind as he calculated on its producing. She stood silent and motionless, and appeared scarcely to notice his words.

"I feel how barbarous such cruelty is to an old and inoffensive parent," said Hemsworth, "whose heart is rent by the recent loss of a son."

"He must not die," said Kate, with a hollow voice, and her pale cheek trembled with a convulsive motion. "Mark must be saved. What was the pledge you hinted at?"

Hemsworth's eyes flashed, and his lip curled with an expression of triumph. The moment, long sought, long hoped for, had at length arrived, which should gratify both his vengeance and his ambition. The emotion passed rapidly away, and his features assumed a look of subdued sorrow.

"I fear, Miss O'Donoghue," said he, "that my hope was but like the straw which the drowning hand will grasp at; but, tortured as my mind has been by expedients, which more mature thought has ever

discovered to be impracticable, I suffered myself to believe that possible, which my own heart forbids me to hope for."

He waited a few seconds to give her an opportunity of speaking, but she was silent, and he went on—

"The guarantee I alluded to would be the pledge of one, whose loyalty to the Government stands above suspicion; one, whose services have met no requital, but whose reward only awaits the moment of demanding it; such a one as this might make his own character and fortune the recognizance for this young man's conduct, and truck the payment of his own services for a free pardon."

"And who is there thus highly placed, and willing to befriend us."

Hemsworth laid his hand upon his heart, and bowing with deep humility, uttered, in a low, faint voice—

"He who now stands before you!"

"You," cried Kate, as clasping her hands in an ecstacy, she fixed her tearful eyes upon him. "You would do this?" Then growing suddenly pale, as a sick shudder came over her, she said, in a deep and broken voice, "At what price, sir?"

The steady gaze she fixed upon him seemed to awe and abash him, and it was with unfeigned agitation that he now spoke.

"A price which the devotion of a life long could not repay. Alas! a price I dare no more aspire to, than hope for."

"Speak plainly, sir," said Kate, in a firm, collected tone, "this is not a moment for misconception. What part have I to play in this compact, for by your manner I suppose you include me in it?"

"Forgive me, young lady, I have not courage to place the whole fortunes of my life upon one cast; already I feel the heaviness of heart that heralds in misfortune. I would rather live on with even this faint glimmer of hope than with the darkness of despair for ever." His hands dropped powerless at his side, his head fell forward on his bosom, and as if without an effort of his will, almost unconsciously his lips muttered the words, "I love you."

Had the accents been the sting of an adder they could not have called up an expression of more painful meaning than flashed over Kate's features.

"And this, then, is the price you hinted at—this was to be the compact."

The proud look of scorn she threw upon him evoked no angry feeling in his breast, he seemed overwhelmed by sorrow, and did not dare even to look up.

"You judge me hardly, unfairly too; I never meant my intercession

should be purchased—humble as I am, I should be still more unworthy, had I harboured such a thought; my hope was this, to make my intervention available, I should show myself linked with the fortunes of that house I tried to save—it should be a case, where, personally, my own interest was at stake, and where my fortune, all I possessed in the world was in the scale, if you consented"—here he hesitated, faltered, and finally became silent, then passing his hands across his eyes, resumed more rapidly—"but I must not speak of this; alas! that my tongue should have ever betrayed it; you have forced my secret from me, and with it my happiness for ever—forget this, I beseech you forget that, even in a moment so unguarded, I dared to lift my eyes to the shrine my heart has worshipped. I ask no pledge, no compact, I will do my utmost to save this youth; I will spare no exertion or influence I possess with the Government; I will make his pardon the recompense due to myself, but if that be impossible, I will endeavour to obtain connivance at his escape, and all the price I ask for this is, your forgiveness of my presumption."

Kate held out her hand towards him, while a smile of bewitching loveliness played over her features; "this is to be a friend indeed," said she.

Hemsworth bent down his head till his lips rested on her fingers, and as he did so, the hot tears trickled on her hand, then suddenly starting up, he said, "I must lose no time; where shall I find your cousin?—in what part of the country has he sought shelter?"

"The shealing at the foot of Hungry mountain, he mentioned to Herbert as the rendezvous for the present."

"Is he alone—has he no companion?"

"None, save, perhaps, the idiot boy who acts as his guide in the mountains."

"Farewell then," said Hemsworth, "you shall soon hear what success attends my efforts; farewell"—and, without waiting for more, he hastened from the spot, and was soon heard descending the causeway at a rapid pace.

Kate stood for a few moments lost in thought, and as the sound of the retreating hoofs aroused her, she looked up, and muttering to herself, "It was nobly done," returned with slow steps to the house.

As Hemsworth spurred his horse, and urged him to his fastest speed, expressions of mingled triumph and vengeance burst from him at intervals—"Mine at last," cried he—"mine in spite of every obstacle, —Fortune is seldom so kind as this—vengeance and ambition both gratified together—me, whom they dispised for my poverty, and my

low birth—that it should be my destiny to crush them to the dust!" These words were scarcely uttered, when his horse, pressed beyond his strength, stumbled over a rut in the road, and fell heavily to the ground, throwing his rider under him.

For a long time no semblance of consciousness returned, and the groom, fearing to leave him, had to wait for hours until a country car should pass, in which his wounded master might be laid. There came one by at last, and on this Hemsworth was laid, and brought back to "the Lodge." Before he reached home, however, sense had so far returned, as, that he felt his accident was attended with no serious injury; the shock of the fall was the only circumstance of any gravity.

The medical man of Macroom was soon with him, and partly confirmed his own first impressions, but strictly enjoining rest and quiet, as in the event of any unusual excitement, the worst consequences might ensue. Hemsworth bore up under the injunction with all the seeming fortitude he could muster, but in his heart he cursed the misfortune that thus delayed the hour of his long-sought vengeance.

"This may continue a week, then?" cried he, impatiently.

The doctor nodded an assent.

"Two—three weeks, perhaps?"

"It will be a month, at least, before I can pronounce you out of danger," said the physician, gravely.

"A month! Great Heaven!—a month! And what are the dangers you apprehend, in the event of my not submitting?"

"There are several, and very serious ones—inflammation of the brain, fever, derangement even."

"Yes, and are you sure this confinement will not drive me mad?" cried he, passionately; "will you engage that my brain will hold out against the agonizing thoughts that will not cease to torture me all this while?—or can you promise that events shall stand still for the moment when I can resume my place once more among men?"

The hurried and excited tone in which he spoke was only a more certain evidence of the truth of the medical fears; and, without venturing on any direct reply, the doctor gave some directions for his treatment, and withdrew.

The physician's apprehensions were well founded. The first few hours after the accident seemed to threaten nothing serious, but as night fell, violent headache and fever set in, and before day-break, he was quite delirious.

No sooner did the news reach Carrig-na-curra, than Kerry was dispatched to bring back tidings of his state; for, however different the

estimation in which he was held by each, one universal feeling pervaded all—of sorrow for his disaster. Day after day, Sir Archy or Herbert went over to inquire after him; but some chronic feature of his malady seemed to have succeeded, and he lay in one unvarying condition of lethargic unconsciousness.

In this way, week after week glided over, and the condition of the country seemed like that of the sick man—one of slumbering apathy. The pursuit of Mark, so eagerly begun, had, as it were, died out. The proclamations of reward, torn down by the country people on their first appearance, were never renewed, and the military party, after an ineffectual search through Killarney, directed their steps northwards towards Tralee, and soon after returned to head-quarters. Still, with all these signs of security, Mark, whose short experience of life, had taught him caution, rarely ventured near Carrig-na-curra, and never passed more than a few moments beneath his father's roof.

While each had a foreboding that this calm was but the lull that preludes a storm, their apprehensions took very different and opposing courses. Kate's anxieties increased with each day of Hemsworth's illness; she saw the time gliding past in which escape seemed practicable, and yet knew not how to profit by the opportunity. Sir Archy, coupling the activity with which Mark's pursuit was first undertaken, with the sudden visit of Hemsworth to the country, and the abandonment of all endeavours to capture him, which followed on Hemsworth's accident, felt strong suspicion that the agent was the prime mover in the whole affair, and that his former doubts were well founded regarding him; while Herbert, less informed than either on the true state of matters, formed opinions which changed and vacillated with each day's experience.

In this condition of events, Sir Archy had gone over one morning alone, to inquire after Hemsworth, whose case, for some days preceding, was more than usually threatening—symptoms of violent delirium having succeeded to the dead lethargy in which he was sunk. Buried deeply in his conjectures as to the real nature of the part he was acting, and how far his motives tallied with honourable intentions, the old man plodded wearily on, weighing every word he could remember that bore upon events, and carefully endeavouring to divest his mind of every thing like a prejudice. Musing thus, he accidentally diverged from the regular approach, and turned off into a narrow path, which led to the back of "the Lodge;" nor was he aware of his mistake, till he saw, at the end of the walk, the large window of a room he remembered as belonging to the former building. The sash was open, but the curtains

were drawn closely, so as to intercept any view from within or without. He observed these things, as fatigued by an unaccustomed exertion, he seated himself, for some moments' rest, on a bench beneath the trees.

A continuous, low, moaning sound soon caught his ear; he listened, and could distinctly hear the heavy breathing of a sick man, accompanied as it was by long-drawn sighs. There were voices, also, of persons speaking cautiously together, and the words, "He is asleep at last," were plainly audible, after which the door closed, and all was still.

The solemn awe which great illness inspires was felt in all its force by the old man, as he sat like one spell-bound, and unable to depart. The labouring respiration that seemed to bode the ebb of life, made his own strong heart tremble, for he thought how, in his last hours, he might have wronged him. "Oh! if I have been unjust—if I have followed him to the last with ungenerous doubt—forgive me, Heaven; even now my own heart is half my accuser;" and his lips murmured a deep and fervent prayer, for that merciful benevolence, which, in his frail nature, he denied to another. He arose from his knees with a spirit calmed, and a courage stronger, and was about to retire, when a sudden cry from the sick room arrested his steps. It was followed by another more shrill and piercing still, and then a horrid burst of frantic laughter: dreadful as the anguish-wrung notes of suffering—how little do they seem in comparison with the sounds of mirth from the lips of madness!

"There—there," cried a voice, he at once knew as Hemsworth's—"that's him, that's your prisoner—make sure of him now; remember your orders, men!—do you hear; if they attempt a rescue, load with ball, and fire low—mind that, fire low. Ah! you are pale enough now;" and again the savage laughter rung out. "Yes, madam," continued he, in a tone of insolent sarcasm, "every respect shall be shown him—a chair in the dock—a carpet on the gallows. You shall wear mourning for him—all the honeymoon, if you fancy it. Yes," screamed he, in a wild and frantic voice, "this is like revenge! You struck me once—you called me coarse plebeian, too! We shall be able to see the blood you are proud of—aye, the blood! the blood!"—and then, as if worn out by exhaustion, he heaved a heavy sigh, and fell into deep moaning as before.

Sir Archy, who felt in the scene a direct acknowledgment of his appeal to Heaven, drew closer to the window, and listened. Gradually, and like one awaking from a heavy slumber, the sick man stretched his limbs, and drew a long sigh, whose groaning accent spoke of great debility; and then, starting up in his bed, shouted—

"It is, it is the King's warrant—who dares to oppose it. Ride in faster, men—faster; keep together here, the west side of the mountain. There—there, yonder, near the beach. Who was that spoke of pardon? Never; if he resists, cut him down. Ride for it, men, ride;" and in his mad excitement, he arose from his bed, and gained the floor. "There—that's him yonder; he has taken to the mountains; five hundred guineas to the hand that grasps him first," and he tottered to the window, and tearing aside the curtain, looked out.

Worn and wasted, with beard unshaven for weeks long, and eyes glistening with the lustre of insanity, the expression of his features actually chilled the heart's blood of the old man, as he stood almost at his side, and unable to move away. For a second or two Hemsworth gazed on the other, as if some struggling effort of recognition was labouring in his brain; and then, with a mad struggle he exclaimed—

"They were too late; the Council gave but eight days. I suppressed the proclamation in the south. Eight days—after that, no pardon—in this world at least"—and a fearful grin of malice convulsed his features; then with an altered accent, and a faint smile, from which sickness tore its oft-assumed dissimulation, he said, "I did every thing to persuade him to surrender—to accept the gracious favour of the crown; but he would not—no, he would not!"—and, with another burst of laughter, he staggered back into the room, and fell helpless on the floor. Sir Archy was in no compassionate mood at the moment, and without bestowing a thought on the sufferer, he hastened down the path, and with all the speed of which he was capable, returned to Carrig-na-curra.

CHAPTER XLII.

"THE SHEALING."

Sir Archy's manner, so precise and measured in every occasion of life, had undergone a very marked change before he arrived at Carrig-na-curra; exclamations broke from him at every moment, mingled with fervently expressed hopes, that he might not be yet too late to rescue Mark from his peril. The agitation of his mind and the fatigue of his

exertions completely overcame him; and when he reached the house, he threw himself down upon a seat, utterly exhausted.

"Are you unwell, my dear uncle?" broke from Kate and Herbert together, as they stood at either side of his chair.

"Tired, wearied, heated, my dear children; nothing more. Send me Kerry here; I want to speak to him."

Kerry soon entered, and Sir Archy, beckoning him to his side, whispered a few words rapidly into his ear. Kerry made no reply, but hastened from the room, and was soon after seen hurrying down the causeway.

"I see, my dear uncle," whispered Kate, with a tremulous accent—"I see you have bad tidings for us this morning—he is worse."

"Waur he canna be," muttered Sir Archy, with a significance that gave the words a very equivocal meaning.

"But there is still hope. They told us yesterday that to-morrow would be the crisis of the malady—the twentieth day since his relapse."

"Yes, yes!" said the old man, who, not noticing her remark, pursued aloud the track of his own reflections. "Entrapped—ensnared—I see it all now. And only eight days given!—and even of these to be kept in ignorance. Poor fellow, how you have been duped."

"But this delirium may pass away, uncle," said Kate, who, puzzled at his vague expressions, sought to bring him again to the theme of Hemsworth's illness.

"Then comes the penalty, lassie," cried he, energetically. "The Government canna forgie a rebel, as parents do naughty children, by the promise of doing better next time. When a daring scheme—but wait a bit, here's Kerry. Come to the window, man; come over here," and he called him towards him.

Whatever were the tidings Kerry brought, Sir Archy seemed overjoyed by them; and taking Herbert's arm, he hurried from the room, leaving the O'Donoghue and Kate in a state of utter bewilderment.

"I'm afraid, my sweet niece, that Hemsworth's disease is a catching one. Archy has a devilish wild, queer look about him to-day," said the O'Donoghue, laughing.

"I hope he has heard no bad news, sir. He is seldom so agitated as this. But what can this mean? Here comes a chaise up the road. See, it has stopped at the gate, and there is Kerry hastening down with a portmantua."

Sir Archy entered as she spoke, dressed for the road, and approaching his brother-in-law's chair, whispered a few words in his ear.

"Great heaven protect us!" exclaimed the O'Donoghue, falling back,

half unconscious, into his seat. While, turning to Kate, Sir Archy took her hand in both of his, and said—

"My ain dear bairn, I have no secrets from you; but time is too short to say much now. Enough, if I tell you Mark is in danger—the greatest and most imminent. I must hasten up to Dublin and see the Secretary, and, if possible, the Lord Lieutenant. It may be necessary, perhaps, for me to proceed to London. Herbert is already off to the mountains, to warn Mark of his peril. If he can escape till I return, all may go well yet. Above all things, however, let no rumour of my journey escape. I'm only going to Macroom, or Cork, mind that, and to be back to-morrow evening, or next day."

A gesture from Kerry, who stood on the rock above the road, warned him that all was ready; and, with an affectionate but hurried adieu, he left the room, and gaining the high road, was soon proceeding towards Dublin, at the fastest speed of the posters.

"Them's the bastes can do it," said Kerry, as he watched them, with the admiration of a connoisseur; "and the little one wid the rat-tail isn't the worst either."

"Where did that chaise come from, Kerry?" cried the O'Donoghue, who could not account for the promptitude of Sir Archy's movements.

"'Twas with Doctor Dillon from Macroom it came, sir; and it was to bring him back there again; but Sir Archibald told me to give the boy a pound note, to make a mistake, and come over here for himself. That's the way of it."

While we leave the O'Donoghue and his niece to the interchange of their fears and conjectures regarding the danger which they both concurred in believing had been communicated to Sir Archy by Hemsworth, we must follow Herbert, who was now on his way to the mountains, to apprize Mark that his place of concealment was already discovered, and that measures for his capture were taken in a spirit that indicated a purpose of personal animosity.

Herbert knew little more than this, for it was no part of Sir Archy's plan to impart to any one his discovery of Hemsworth's treachery, lest, in the event of his recovery, their manner towards him would lead him to a change of tactique. Hemsworth was too cunning an adversary to concede any advantage to. Indeed, the only chance of success against him lay in taking the opportunity of his present illness, to anticipate his movements. Sir Archy, therefore, left the family at Carrigna-curra in ignorance of this man's villainy, as a means of lulling him into security. The expressions that fell from him, half unconsciously,

in the drawing-room, fortunately contributed to this end, and induced both the O'Donoghue and Kate to believe that, whatever the nature of the tidings Sir Archy had learned, their source was no other than Hemsworth himself, of whose good intentions towards Mark no suspicion existed.

Herbert's part was limited to the mere warning of Mark, that he should seek some more secure resting-place; but what kind the danger was, from whom or whence it came, the youth knew nothing. He was not, indeed, unaware of Mark's political feelings, nor did he undervalue the effect his principles might produce upon his actions. He knew him to be intrepid, fearless, and determined; and he also knew how the want of some regular pursuit or object in life had served farther to unsettle his notions and increase the discontent he felt with his condition. If Herbert did not look up to Mark with respect for the superior qualities of mind, there were traits in his nature that inspired the sentiment fully as strongly. The bold rapidity with which he anticipated and met a danger, the fertile resources he evinced at moments when most men stand appalled and terror-struck, the calmness of his spirit when great peril was at hand, showed that the passionate and wayward nature was the struggle which petty events create, and not the real germ of his disposition.

Herbert foresaw that such a character had but to find the fitting sphere for its exercise, to win an upward way; but he was well aware of the risks to which it exposed its possessor. On this theme his thoughts dwelt the entire day, as he trod the solitary path among the mountains; nor did he meet with one human thing along that lonely road. At last, as evening was falling, he drew near the glen which wound along the base of the mountain, and as he was endeavouring to decide on the path, a low whistle attracted him. This, remembering it was the signal, he replied to, and the moment after Terry crept from a thick cover of brushwood, and came towards him.

"I thought I'd make sure of you before I let you pass, Master Herbert," cried he, "for I couldn't see your face, the way your head was hanging down. Take the little path to the left, and never turn till you come to the white-thorn tree—then straight up the mountain for a quarter of a mile or so, till you reach three stones, one over another. From that spot you'll see the shealing down beneath you."

"My brother is there now?" said Herbert, enquiringly.

"Yes; he never leaves it long now; and he got a bit of a fright the other evening, when the French schooner came into the bay."

"A French schooner here, in the bay?"

"Ay, just so; but with an English flag flying. She landed ten

men at the point, and then got out to sea as fast as she could. She was out of sight before dark."

"And the men—what became of them?"

"They staid an hour or more with Master Mark. One of them was an old friend, I think; for I never saw such delight as he was in to see your brother. He gave him two books, and some paper, and a bundle—I don't know what was in it—and then they struck off towards Kenmare Bay, by a road very few know in these parts."

All these particulars surprised and interested Herbert not a little;—for although far from implicitly believing the correctness of Terry's tidings, as to the vessel being a French one, yet the event seemed not insignificant, as showing that Mark had friends, who were aware of his present place of concealment. Without wasting further time, however, he bade Terry good-bye, and started along the path down the glen.

Following Terry's directions, Herbert found the path, which, in many places was concealed by loose furze bushes, evidently to prevent detection by strangers, and at last, having gained the ridge of the mountain, perceived the little shealing at a distance of some hundred feet beneath him. It was merely a few young trees, covered over with loose sods, which, abutting against the slope of the hill, opened towards the sea, from whence the view extended along thirty miles of coast on either hand.

At any other moment, the glorious landscape before him would have engrossed Herbert's entire attention. The calm sea, over which night was slowly stealing—the jutting promontories of rock, over whose sides the white foam was splashing—the tall dark cliffs, pierced by many a cave, through which the sea roared like thunder—all these caught his thoughts but for a second, and already with bounding steps he hurried down the steep, where the next moment a scene revealed itself, of far deeper interest to his heart.

Through the roof of the shealing, from which, in many places, the dry sods had fallen, he discovered his brother, stretched upon the earthen floor of the hut, intently gazing on a large map, which lay widespread before him. The figure was indeed Mark's. The massive head, on either side of which, in flowing waves, the long and locky hair descended, there was no mistaking. But the costume was one Herbert saw for the first time. It was a simple uniform of blue and white, with a single silver epaulette, and a sword, hilted with the same metal. The shako was of dark fur, and ornamented with a large bouquet of tri-colored ribbons, whose gay and flaunting colours streamed with a strange

contrast along the dark earthen floor. Amid all his terror for what these emblems might portend, his heart bounded with pride at the martial and handsome figure, as, leaning on one elbow, he traced with the other hand the lines upon the map. Unable to control his impatience longer, he cried out—

"Mark, my brother!" and the next moment they were in each other's arms.

"You passed Terry on the mountain? He was at his post, I trust?" said Mark, anxiously.

"Yes, but for his directions I could never have discovered the path."

"All's well, then. Until I hear a certain signal from him, I fear nothing. The fellow seems neither to eat nor sleep. At least since I've been here, he has kept watch night and day in the mountains."

"He always loved you, Mark."

"He did so; but now it is not me he thinks of. His whole heart is in the cause—higher and nobler than a mere worthless life like mine."

"Poor fellow! he is but half-witted at best," said Herbert.

"The more reason for his fidelity now," said Mark, bitterly. "The men of sense are traitors to their oaths, and false to their friends. The enterprise cannot reckon, save on the fool or the madman. I know the taunt you hint at, as——"

"My dearest brother," cried Herbert, with streaming eyes.

"My own dear Herbert, forgive me," said Mark, as he flung his arm round his neck. "These bursts of passion come over me after long and weary thoughts. I am tired to-day. Tell me, how are they all at Carrig-na-curra?"

"Well, and, I would say, happy, Mark, were it not for their anxieties about you. My uncle heard some news to-day so threatening in its nature, that he has set out for Dublin post haste, and merely wrote these few lines, which he gave me for you before he started."

Mark read the paper twice over, and then tearing it, threw the fragments at his feet, while he muttered—

"I cannot, I must not leave this."

"But your safety depends on it, Mark—so, my uncle pressed upon me. The danger is imminent, and, he said, fatal."

"So would it be, were I to leave my post. I cannot tell you, Herbert—I dare not reveal to you what our oath forbids me:—but here I must remain."

"And this dress, Mark—why increase the risk you run by a uniform which actually designates treason?"

"Who will dare to tell me so?" cried Mark, impetuously. "The uniform is that of a French grenadier—the service whose toil is glory, and whose cause is liberty. It is enough that I do not wear it without authority. You can satisfy yourself on that head soon. Read this," and he unfolded a paper, which, bearing the arms and seal of the French Republic, purported to be a commission as Lieutenant in Hoche's own regiment of grenadiers, conferred on Mark O'Donoghue in testimony of esteem for his fidelity to the cause of Irish independence. "You are surprised that I can read the language, Herbert," said he, smiling; "but I have laboured hard this summer, and, with Kate's good aid, have made some progress."

"And is your dream of Irish independence brought so low as this, Mark—that the freedom you speak of must be won by an alien's valour?"

"They are no aliens, whose hearts beat alike for liberty. Language, country, seas may divide us, but we are brothers in the glorious cause of humanity. Their swords are with us now, as would be ours for them, did the occasion demand them. Besides, we must teach the traitors, boy, that we can do without them—that if her own sons are false, Ireland has friends as true; and then, woe to them who have betrayed her. Oh, my brother, the brother of my heart, how would I kneel in thankfulness to heaven, if the same hopes that stirred within me were yours also. If the genius you possess were enlisted in the dear cause of your own country—if we could go forth together, hand in hand, and meet danger side by side, as now we stand."

"My love for you would make the sacrifice, Mark," said Herbert, as the tears rolled heavily along his cheek; but my convictions, my reason, my religion, alike forbid it."

"Your religion, Herbert?—did I hear you aright?"

"You did. I am a Protestant."

Mark fell back as his brother spoke; a cold leaden tinge spread over his features, and he seemed like one labouring against the sickness of an ague.

"Oh, is it not time!" cried he, as he clasped his hands above his head, and shook them in an agony of emotion—"is it not time to strike the blow, ere every tie that bound us to the land should be rent asunder; rank, place, wealth, and power they have despoiled us of; our faith degraded, our lineage scoffed, and now the very links of blood divided—we have not brothers left us!"

Herbert bent down his head upon his knees, and wept bitterly.

"Who will tell me I have not been tried, now?" continued Mark, in a strain of impassioned sorrow—"deceived on every hand—robbed of my heritage—my friends all false—my father"—he stopped short, for at the moment Herbert looked up, and their eyes met.

"What of our father, Mark?"

"My brain was wandering then," said Mark, in a broken voice. "Once more I ask forgiveness: we are brothers still; if we be but true of heart to Him who knows all hearts, He will not suffer us to be divided. Can you remain a while with me, Herbert?—I know you don't mind a rough bivouac."

"Yes, Mark, I'll not leave you. All is well at home, and they will guess what cause detained me." So saying, the two brothers sat down side by side, and with hands clasped firmly in each other, remained sunk in silent thought.

The whole night through they talked together. It was the first moment, for many a long year, since they had unburdened their hearts like brothers, and in the fulness of their affection the most secret thoughts were revealed, save one topic only, of which neither dared to speak, and while each incident of the past was recalled, and friends were mentioned, Mark never once alluded to Kate, nor did Herbert utter the name of Sybella Travers.

Of his plans for the future, Mark made no secret; he had accepted a commission in the French army, on the understanding that an invasion of Ireland was determined on, in the event of which, his services would be of some value. He hoped to reach France by the schooner, which, after landing her cargo near the mouth of the Shannon, was to return at once to Cherbourg; once there, he was to enter the service, and learn its discipline.

"I have made my bargain with them; my face is never to turn from England, till Ireland be free; after that I am theirs, to march on the Rhine or the Danube—where they will. Personal ambition I have none!—to serve as a simple grenadier in the ranks of that army, that shall first plant the standard of liberty here; such is my only compact. Speak to me of defeat or disaster, if you will; but do not endeavour to persuade me against an enterprise I have resolved to go through with, nor try to argue with me, where my impulses are stronger than my reason."

In this strain Mark spoke, and while Herbert listened in sorrow, he knew too well his brother's nature, to offer a word of remonstrance in opposition to his determination.

Mark, on his side, led his brother to talk of many of his own plans for the future, where another and a very different ambition was displayed.

Herbert had entered the lists where intellect and genius are the weapons, and in his early triumphs had conceived that passion for success, which once indulged, only dies with life itself. The day broke upon them, thus conversing, and already the sunlight was streaming over the western ocean, as they lay down side by side, and slept.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"THE CONFEDERATES."

THE paroxysm which Sir Archibald had witnessed, formed the crisis of Hemsworth's malady; and on the evening of the same day, his disease had so far abated of its violence, that his delirium had left him, and excessive debility was now the only symptom of great danger remaining. With the return of his faculties, came back his memory, clear and unclouded, of every incident up to the very moment of his accident; and as he lay, weak and wasted on his bed, his mind reverted to the plans and projects of which his illness had interrupted the accomplishment. The excitement of the theme seemed rather to serve than be hurtful to him; and the consciousness of returning health gave a spring to his recovery; fatigue of thought induced deep sleep, and he awoke on the following day refreshed and recruited.

The lapse of time in illness is, probably, one of the most painful thoughts that await upon recovery. The lethargy in which we have been steeped simulates death; while the march of events around us show how insignificant our existence is, and how independently of us the work of life goes on.

When Wylie was summoned to his master's bed-side, the first question put to him was, what day of the month it was? and his astonishment was, indeed, great, as he heard it was the 16th of December, and that he had been above two months on a sick bed.

"Two months here!" cried he; "and what has happened since?"

"Scarcely anything, sir," said Wylie, well knowing the meaning of the question. "The country is quiet—the people tranquil. Too much so, perhaps, to last. The young O'Donoghue has not been seen up the glen for several weeks past; but his brother passes frequently from

Carrig-na-curra to the coast, and back again, so that there is little doubt of his still being in his old hiding-place. Talbot—Barrington I mean—has been here again, too."

"Barrington!—what brings him back? I thought he was in France."

"The story goes that he landed at Bantry with a French agent. One thing is certain, the fellow had the impudence to call here and leave his card for you, one day I was at Macroom."

"That piece of boldness bodes us no good," said Hemsworth. "What of the others? Who has called here from Carrig-na-curra?"

"A messenger every day; sometimes twice in the same day."

"A messenger!—not one of the family?"

"For several weeks they have had no one to come. Sir Archy and the younger brother are both from home."

"Where, then, is Sir Archy?" said Hemsworth, anxiously.

"That would seem a secret to every one. He left this one morning at a moment's notice, taking the chaise that brought the doctor here. The post-boy pretended he was discharged; but I say that the excuse was made up, and that the fellow was bribed. On reaching Macroom, the old man got fresh horses, and started for Cork."

"And what's the report in the country, Wylie?"

"There are two stories. One, that he heard some rumours of an accusation against himself, for intriguing with the United people, and thought best to get over to Scotland for a while."

"That's folly; what is the other rumour?"

"A more likely one," said Wylie, as he threw a shrewd glance beneath his half-closed eye-lids. "They say that he determined to go up to Dublin, and see the Lord Lieutenant, and ask him for a free pardon for Mark."

Hemsworth sprung up in the bed at these words, as if he had been stung.

"And who says this, Wylie?"

"I believe I was the first that said so myself," said Wylie, affecting modesty; "when Kerry told me, that the old man packed up a court dress and a sword."

"You're right, Sam; there's not a doubt of it. How long is this ago?"

"Five weeks on Tuesday last."

"Five weeks!—five weeks lost already! And have you heard what has been done by him?—what success he's met with?"

"No, sir; but you can soon know something about it yourself."

"How do you mean?—I don't understand you."

"These are the only two letters he has written as yet. This one came on Saturday. I always went down in the mornings to Mary M'Kelly's, before the bag came in, and as she could not read over well, I sorted the letters for her myself, and slipped in these among your own."

Hemsworth and his companion exchanged looks. Probably never did glances more rapidly reveal the sentiments of two hearts. Each, well knew the villainy of the other; but Hemsworth for the first time saw himself in another's power, and hesitated how far the advantage of the discovery was worth the heavy price he should pay for it; besides that the habits of his life made him regard the breach of confidence, incurred in reading another man's letter, in a very different light from his underbred associate, and he made no gesture to take them from his hand.

"This has an English post-mark," said Wylie, purposely occupying himself with the letter, to avoid noticing Hemsworth's hesitation.

"You have not broken the seals, I hope," said Hemsworth, faintly.

"No, sir; I knew better than that," replied Wylie, with well-assumed caution. "I knew your honour had a right to it, if you suspected the correspondence was treasonable, because you're in the Commission, and it's your duty; but I could'nt venture it, of myself."

"I'm afraid your law is not very correct, Master Wylie," said Hemsworth, who felt by no means certain as to the sincerity of the opinion.

"It's good enough for Glenflesk, anyhow," said the fellow, boldly; for he saw that in Hemsworth's present nervous condition, audacity might succeed where subserviency would not.

"By which you mean that we have the case in our own hands, Wylie; well, you're not far wrong in that; still, I cannot break open a letter.

"Well, then, I'm not so scrupulous when my master's interests are concerned;" and so saying, he tore open each in turn, and threw them on the bed. "There, sir, you can transport me for the offence whenever you like."

"You are a strange fellow, Sam," said Hemsworth, whose nerves were too much shaken by illness, to enable him to act with his ordinary decision, and he took up one of the letters, and perused it slowly. "This is merely an announcement of his arrival in Dublin; he has waited upon, but not seen the Secretary—finds it difficult to obtain an audience—press of parliamentary business for the new session—no excitement about the United party. What tidings has the other? Ha!—what's this?"—and his thin and haggard face flushed scarlet. "Leave

me, Sam; I must have a little time to consider this. Come back to me in an hour."

Wylie said not a word, but moved towards the door; while in his sallow features a savage smile of malicious triumph shone.

As Hemsworth flattened out the letter before him on the bed, his eyes glistened and sparkled with the fire of aroused intelligence: the faculties which, during his long illness, had lain in abeyance, as if refreshed and invigorated by rest, were once more excited to their accustomed exercise; and over that face, pale and haggard by sickness, a flush of conscious power stole, lighting up every lineament and feature, and displaying the ascendancy of mental effort over mere bodily infirmity.

"And so this Scotchman dares to enter the list with *me*," said he, with a smile of contemptuous meaning; "let him try it."

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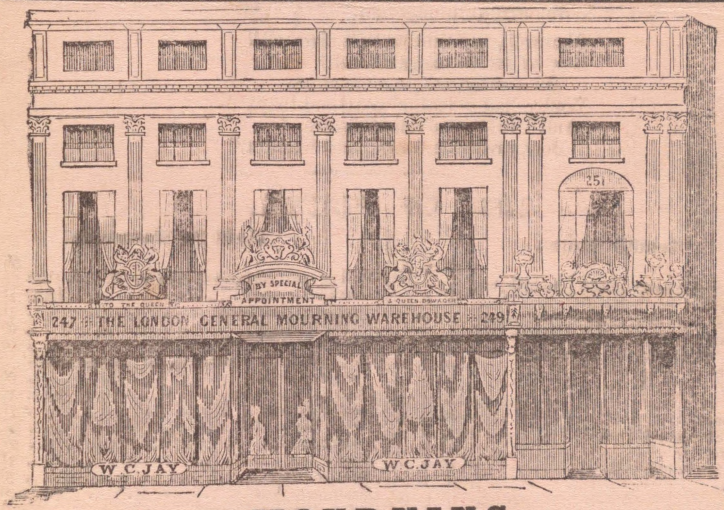

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THE Proprietors of this establishment, in respectfully addressing themselves to the attention of the Nobility, the Gentry, and the Public, beg leave to renew their thanks for the extraordinary support they have received. Every article necessary for a complete Outfit of Mourning, for either the family or household, may be had here, and made up, if required, at the shortest notice; whilst the attendance of competent persons connected with the establishment upon families of rank and of every respectable denomination, enable the proprietors or their assistants to at once suggest or supply every thing necessary for the occasion, and suited to any grade or condition of the community. Skirts, &c., for Widowhood and for Family Mourning are always kept made up, and a note descriptive of the relation of the parties to the deceased will ensure at any time the proper supply of mourning being forwarded, both as to quality and distinction, according to the exigencies of the case; it being needful only to send dresses for patterns, when every requisite will be carefully prepared and chosen to render the appointments complete.

The London General Mourning Warehouse,
Nos. 247 & 249, Regent Street, two doors from Oxford Street.

VALEDICTORY VERSES.

TO A WINTER SUIT.

Farewell, my Winter Suit, farewell!
You've had a tolerable spell
  In serving me, your master;
You've had a deal of wear and tear,
And I to MOSES' must repair
  For garments, boots, and "castor."

The sun is shining in the sky,
And show'rs are falling from on high,
  While April's month discloses;
The blossom's bud, the songster's sing,
And all reminds me, in the spring,
  That I must "off" to MOSES'.

Good, faithful friends you all have been,
And safely have I found you screen
  In winter's gloomy season;
Nor can your master bid adieu,
Without returning thanks to you,
  Who gave him so much reason.

I own your value, and I vow
I'll go to none but MOSES' now,
  To purchase your successors.
MOSES and SON (prime winter suit !)
Have shown themselves, beyond dispute,
  Most admirable dressers.

I hear their new spring goods are such
As gentlemen will value much—
  That nothing can outvie 'em;
And I, from past experience, know
The articles are purchased low,
  So off I go to buy 'em.

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  In serving me, your master;
You've had a deal of wear and tear,
And I to MOSES' must repair
  For garments, boots, and "castor."

LIST OF PRICES.

Ready Made.

	£	s.	d.
Spring and Summer Coats, in all the newest styles . . . . from	0	9	6
Chesterfields and Codringtons, and every description of Overcoats, handsomely trimmed	1	5	0
The Premier	0	15	0
Bulwer	1	0	0
D'Orsay	1	6	0
Shooting Coats	0	8	6
Spring and Summer Trousers	0	4	6
Doeskin ditto	0	12	6
Spring and Summer Vests	0	2	0
Dress Coats	1	0	0
Frock ditto	1	4	0
Boys' Hussar and Tunic Suits . . .	0	16	6

Made to Measure.

	£	s.	d.
Spring and Summer Coats, in all the newest styles . . . . from	1	6	0
Summer Over Coat	1	2	0
Tweed Trousers	0	9	6
Tweed Wrappers	0	18	0
New Pattern Trousers, in all the approved styles	0	16	6
Doeskin Trousers	1	2	0
Best or Dress	1	6	0
Dress Coats	1	12	0
Best Quality	2	15	0
Frock Coats	1	15	0
Best Quality	3	3	0
Cassimere Vest	0	8	6
Satin, Plain or Fancy	0	12	0
Hussar and Tunic Suits	1	8	0

Mourning to any Extent at Five Minutes' Notice.

Gratis and Post-free!—The new Book, entitled "The Treasury of Taste" descriptive of the Houses, and interspersed with Poetical Tales, &c., together with a novel system of self-measurement, important to country residents, may be had on application.

TAKE NOTICE.—The prices of the articles are marked in plain figures, and no abatement can be made. Observe, also, that any article may be exchanged, or that the money paid may be returned.

E. MOSES & SON, Tailors, Woollen Drapers, Hosiers, Furriers, Hatters, Boot and Shoe Makers, and General Outfitters for Ladies and Gentlemen,

154, 155, 156, & 157, Minories, & 83, 84, 85, & 86, Aldgate, City, London.

***** Branch Establishments, 26, Eargate, Sheffield; and 19, Thornton's Buildings, Bradford, Yorkshire.**

*** This Establishment is closed on Saturdays till the Evening.